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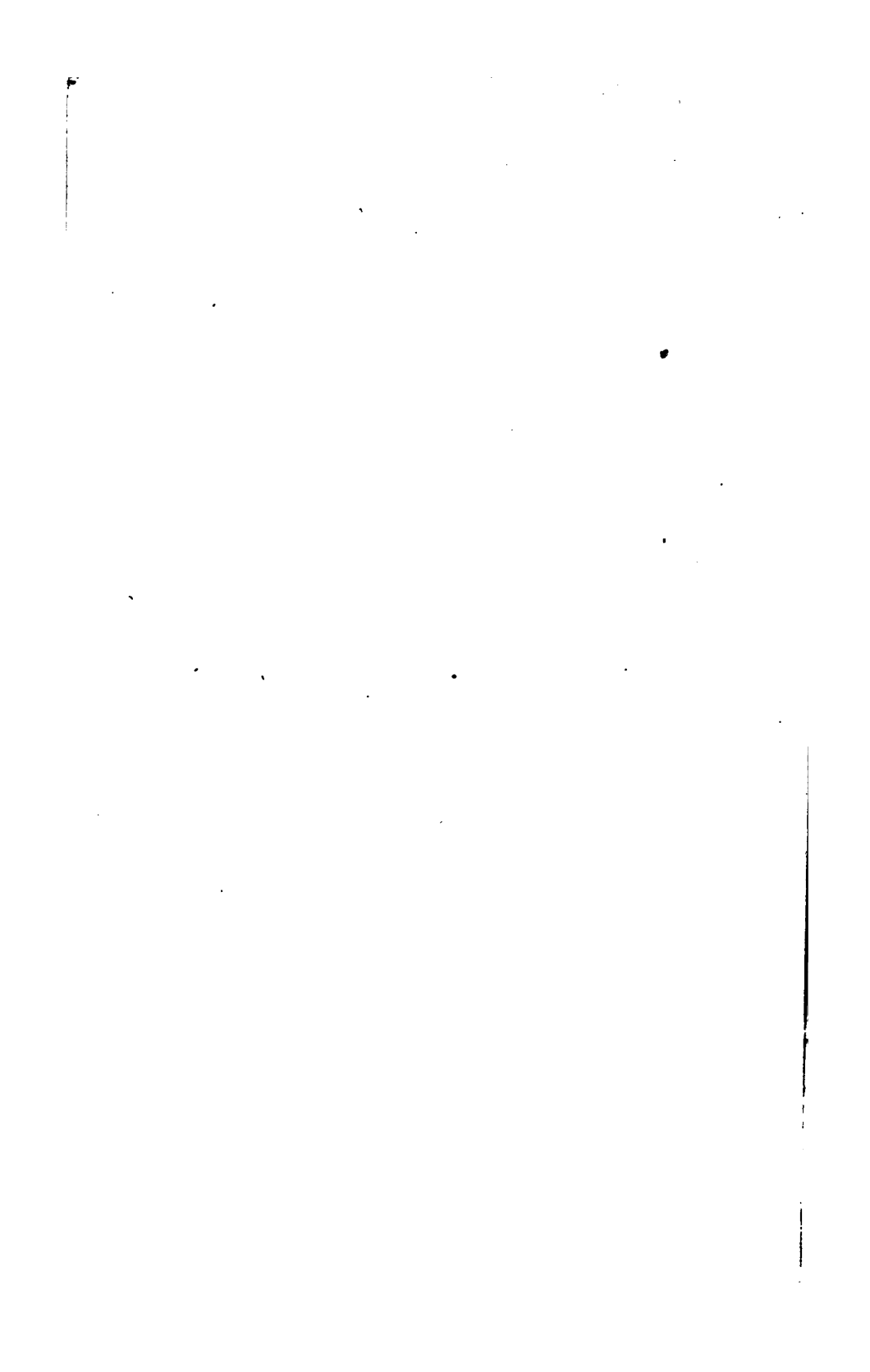
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THE ROMAN.

*A Dramatic Poem.*

BY SYDNEY YENDYS.

LONDON:  
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.  
1850.

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# THE ROMAN.

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## SCENE I.

*A Plain in Italy—an ancient Battle-field. Time, Evening.*

*Persons.—VITTORIO SANTO, a Missionary of Freedom. He has gone out, disguised as a Monk, to preach the Unity of Italy, the Overthrow of Austrian Domination, and the Restoration of a great Roman Republic.—A number of Youths and Maidens, singing as they dance. "The Monk" is musing.*

*Enter Dancers.*

*Dancers.* SING lowly, foot slowly, oh why should we chase  
The hour that gives heaven to this earthly embrace?  
To-morrow, to-morrow, is dreary and lonely;  
Then love as they love who would live to love only!  
Closer yet, eyes of jet,—breasts fair and sweet!  
No eyes flash like those eyes that flash as they meet!  
Weave brightly, wear lightly, the warm-woven chain,  
Love on for to-night if we ne'er love again.



Fond youths ! happy maidens ! we are not alone !  
 Bright steps and sweet voices keep pace with our own.  
 Love-lorn Lusignuolo, the soft-sighing breeze,  
 The rose with the zephyr, the wind with the trees.  
 While Heaven, blushing pleasure, is full of love-notes,  
 Soft down the sweet measure the fairy world floats.

*The Monk advances, meets the Dancers, and points to the  
 turf at their feet.*

*The Monk.* Do you see nothing there,  
 There, where the unrespective grass grows green,  
 There at your very feet ? Nay, not one step !  
 'Twould touch it ! 'twould profane it ! Palsied be  
 The limb that treads that ground ! There is a grave—  
 There is a grave ;—I saw it with these eyes—  
 A grave ! I saw it with these eyes ! It holds—  
 It holds—oh Heaven !—MY MOTHER !

*One of the Revellers.* Peace, good Padre,  
 Look to thy beads. The turf is level here.  
 Comrades ! strike up ! "Sing lowly, foot ——"

*The Monk.* Who steps,  
 Steps first on me. I say there is a grave,  
 I say it is my mother's : that I loved her,  
 Ay, loved her with more passion than the maddest  
 Lover among ye clasps his one-day wife !  
 And I steal forth to keep my twilight vigil,  
 And you come here to dance upon my heart.  
 You come and—with the world at will for dalliance,  
 The whole hot world—deny me that small grave  
 Whose bitter margin these poor knees know better

Than your accustom'd feet the well-worn path  
 To your best harlot's bower. The turf is fair !  
 Have I not kept it green with tears, my mother ?  
 You lustful sons of lax-eyed lewdness, do you  
 Come here to sing above her bones, and mock me,  
 Because my flesh and blood cry out, " God save them ? "  
 May the Heaven's blight——

*One of the Revellers.*                      Nay, holy father, nay,  
 We would not harm thee. Be it as thou wilt.  
 Holy Madonna ! there is little dust  
 In this old land, but has been son or mother  
 In its own day. What-ho ! my merry friends,  
 Come, we must dance upon some other grave.  
 Farewell, good father !

*Another Reveller.*                      Save you, father !

*Another.*    Think not,  
 We would insult thy sorrow.

*The Monk.*                                      Well, forgive me.  
 I pray you listen how I loved my mother,  
 And you will weep with me. She loved me, nurst me,  
 And fed my soul with light. Morning and Even  
 Praying, I sent that soul into her eyes,  
 And knew what Heaven was though I was a child.  
 I grew in stature, and she grew in goodness.  
 I was a grave child ; looking on her taught me  
 To love the beautiful : and I had thoughts  
 Of Paradise, when other men have hardly  
 Look'd out of doors on earth. (Alas ! alas !  
 That I have also learn'd to look on earth  
 When other men see heaven.) I toil'd, but ever

As I became more holy, she seem'd holier ;  
 Even as when climbing mountain-tops the sky  
 Grows ampler, higher, purer as ye rise.  
 Let me believe no more. No, do not ask me  
 How I repaid my mother. O thou saint,  
 That lookest on me day and night from heaven  
 And smilest, I have given thee tears for tears,  
 Anguish for anguish, woe for woe. Forgive me  
 If, in the spirit of ineffable penance  
 In words, I waken up the guilt that sleeps.  
 Let not the sound afflict thine heaven, or colour  
 That pale, tear-blotted record which the angels  
 Keep of my sins. We left her. I and all  
 The brothers that her milk had fed. We left her—  
 And strange dark robbers, with unwonted names,  
 Abused her ! bound her ! pillaged her ! profaned her !  
 Bound her clasped hands, and gagg'd the trembling lips  
 That pray'd for her lost children. And we stood  
 And she knelt to us, and we saw her kneel,  
 And look'd upon her coldly and denied her !  
 Denied her in her agony—and counted  
 Before her sanguine eyes the gold that bought  
 Her pangs. We stood—

*One of the Revellers.* Nay, thou cowl'd ruffian ! hold !  
 There's vengeance for thee yet ! Dost thou come here  
 To blast our hearing with thy damned crimes ?  
 Seize on him, comrades, tear him limb from limb !

*The Monk.* Yes, seize him ! tear him ! tear him ! he will  
 bless thee  
 If thy device can work a deeper pain

Than he will welcome and has suffer'd. Tear him !  
 But, friends, not yet. Hear her last tortures. Then  
 Find, if ye can, some direr pang for me.  
 The Robbers wearied, and they bade us hold her,  
 Lest her death-struggles should get free. She look'd  
 Upon me with the face that lit my childhood,  
 She call'd me with the voices of old times,  
 She blest me in her madness. But, they show'd us  
 Gold, and we seized upon her, held her, bound her,  
 Smote her. She murmur'd kind words, and I gave her  
 Blows.

*One Auditor.* Fiend !

*Another.* Hound !

*Another.* Demon !

*Another.* Strike him !

*Another* Hold him down !

Kill him for hours !

*The Monk.* Why how now, countrymen ?  
 How now, you slaves that should be Romans ? Ah !  
 And you will kill me that I smote my mother ?  
 Well done, well done, a righteous doom ! I smote  
 My mother ? Hold ! My mother, did I say ?  
 My mother ? Mine, yours, ours !

*One Auditor.* Seize him.

*All.* Die, liar !

Die.

*The Monk.* But my brothers—will you seize my brothers ?  
 What ! will you let that cursed band escape  
 That hoard the very gold that slew her ? Make  
 A full end. Finish up the work. You cowards !

What ! you can pounce on an unarm'd poor man,  
But tremble at the gilded traitors !

*All.*

Name them !

They shall die ! Point them out ! where are they ?

*The Monk.*

HERE !

You are my brothers. And my mother was  
Yours. And each man among you day by day  
Takes, bowing, the same price that sold my mother,  
And does not blush. Her name is ROME. Look round,  
And see those features which the sun himself  
Can hardly leave for fondness. Look upon  
Her mountain bosom, where the very sky  
Beholds with passion : and with the last proud  
Imperial sorrow of dejected empire,  
She wraps the purple round her outraged breast,  
And even in fetters cannot be a slave.  
Look on the world's best glory and worst shame.  
You cannot count her beauties or her chains,  
You cannot know her pangs or her endurance.  
You, whom propitious skies may hardly coax  
To threescore years and ten. Your giant fathers  
Call'd Atlas demigod. But what is she,  
Who, worn with eighteen centuries of bondage,  
Stands manacled before the world, and bears  
Two hemispheres—innumerable wrongs,  
Illimitable glories. Oh, thou heart  
That art most tortured, look on her and say  
If there be any thing in earth or heaven,  
In earth or heaven—now that Christ weeps no longer—  
So most divinely sad. Look on her. Listen

To all the tongues with which the earth cries out.  
Flowers, fountains, winds, woods, spring and summer incense,  
Morning and eve—these are her voices—hear them !  
Remember how, in the old innocent days  
Of your young childhood, these sang blessings on you.  
Remember how you danced to those same voices,  
And sank down tired, and slept in joy, not doubting  
That they would sing to-morrow ; and remember  
How when some hearts that danced in those old days,  
And worn out laid them down, and have not waken'd,  
Gave back no answer to the morning sun,  
She took them to her mother's breast and still  
Holds them unweary, singing by their slumbers,  
And though you have forgotten them remembers  
To strew their unregarded graves with flowers.  
Oh those old days, those canonized days !  
Oh that bright realm of sublunary heaven,  
Wherein they walk'd in haloes of sweet light,  
And we look'd up, unfearing, and drew near  
And learnt of them what no succeeding times  
Can tell us since of joy ;—for so, being angels,  
They suffer'd little children. Oh those days !  
Why is it that we hear them now no more ?  
And the same destiny that brought us pangs  
Took every balsam hence ? Did we wake up  
From infancy's last slumber in a new  
And colder world ? My mother, thou shalt answer !  
I hear thee—see thee. The same soul informs  
The present that look'd once through undimm'd eyes  
In Childhood's past. What though it shines through tears ?

It shines. What though it speaks with trembling lips,  
Tuned to such grief that they say bright words sadly ?  
It speaks. And by that speech thou art the mother  
That bore us ! Oh you sons of hers, remember  
When joy had grown to passion, and high youth  
Had aim'd the shafts that lay in Childhood's quiver,  
If you have ever gone out, (and each Roman  
Heart must have note of one such better day,)  
Full of high thoughts, ambitions, destinies,  
And stood, downcast, among her ruin'd altars,  
And fed the shameful present with the past ;  
And felt thy soul on the stern food grow up  
To the old Roman stature : and hast started  
To feel a hundred nameless things, which Kings  
Call sins,—and Patriots, virtues : and self-judged,  
Conscious and purple with the glorious treason,  
Hast lifted flashing eyes, bold with great futures,  
And in one glance challenged her earth, seas, skies,  
And they have said, " WELL DONE." And thou hast felt  
Like a proud child whom a proud mother blesses.  
Ah ! your brows kindle ! What ! I have said well ?  
What ! there are some among you who have been  
The heroes of an hour ? you men of Parma,  
What ! you were Romans once ! you worse than slaves,  
Who, being Romans once, are men of Parma !  
Tried on the Roman habit, and could wear it  
But a short hour on your degenerate limbs !  
Sons of the empress of the world, and slaves  
To powers a Roman bondman would not count  
Upon his fingers on a holiday !

Do not believe me yet. She is no mother,  
Who has but nursed your joy and pride. Remember,  
If thou hast ever wept without a heart  
To catch one tear, and in the lonely anguish  
Of thy neglected agony look'd out  
On this immortal world, and seen—love-stricken—  
Light after light her shadowy joys take up  
Thy lorn peculiar sorrow, till thy soul  
Seem'd shed upon the universe, and grief,  
Deponent of its separate sadness, clung  
To the stupendous dolour of all things,  
And wept with the great mourner, and smiled with her  
When she came back to sunshine—with the joy  
Of a young child after the first great grief  
Wherein a mother's holy words first spake  
To the young heart of God. But I am dreaming ;  
You have not wept as I have. Yet remember,  
If she hath shown you softer signs than these—  
If there are none among you who have given  
To her chaste beauty, to the woods and mountains,  
And lone dim places, sorrowfully sweet,  
Where love first learns to hear himself, and blush not—  
Thoughts which you would deny me at confession,  
Thoughts, which although the peril of a soul  
Hung on their utterance, would have gone unborn  
In silence down to hell, unblest, unshriven,  
And, in despairing coyness, daring all,  
Because they could dare nothing. Like the shy  
Scared bird, to which the serpent's jaws are better  
Than his rude eyes. And yet you gave them to HER,



And these same trembling phantasies went forth,  
To meet the storms that shake the Apennines,  
And did not fear. And so you call'd her MOTHER,  
And so the invisible in you confest  
The unseen in her ; and so you bore your witness  
To her august maternity, and she  
Reflected back the troth. Remember, *so*  
Great Romulus and those who after him  
Built the Eternal City, and their own  
Twin-born eternity—even as the workman  
Is greater than the work—stood at her knee,  
And brighten'd in her blessing ; and remember  
If they were sons like you ! What ! can dead names  
Stir living blood ? Fear not, my countrymen !  
They are not German chieftains that I spoke of.  
Tremble not, brethren, they are not our lords.  
*Our* lords ! they conquered men. They are some souls  
That once took flesh and blood in Italy,  
And thought it was a land to draw free breath in,  
And drew it long, and died here ; and since live  
Everywhere else. What ! your brows darken ! what !  
I wrong'd you foully ; 'twas no fear that daubed them :  
What ! your cheeks flush as some old soldier's child,  
Glowes at inglorious ease when a chance tongue  
Speaks of the triumph where his father fell !  
What then ! these dead are yours ! Men, what are they ?  
What are they ?—ask the world and it shall answer.  
And *you* ? True, true, you have your creed ; you tell me  
That twice a thousand years have not outworn  
The empire in that blood of theirs that flows

In your dull veins. You tell me you are Romans !  
Yet they were lords and you are slaves ; the earth  
Heard them and shook. It shakes, perchance, for you ;  
Shakes with the laugh of scorn that there are things  
Who lick the dust that falls from Austrian feet,  
And call the gods their fathers ! Bear with me,  
I am not here to reckon up your shames,  
I will know nothing here but my wrong'd mother.  
I cry before heaven she is yours. That you  
May kill me for the part I bore, and then  
Do judgment on yourselves. Look on that mother  
Whose teeming loins peopled with gods and heroes  
Earth and Olympus—sold to slaves whose base  
Barbarian passions had been proud to swell  
In death a Roman pageant. Every limb  
Own'd by some separate savage—each charm lent  
To some peculiar lust. The form that served  
The world for signs of beauty, parcell'd out  
A carcase on the shambles, where small kings,  
Like unclean birds, hang round the expected carrion,  
And chaffer for the corpse which shall not die !  
Look on that mother and behold her sons !  
Alas, she might be Rome if there were Romans !  
Look on that mother ! Wilt thou know that death  
Can have no part in Beauty ? Cast to-day  
A seed into the earth, and it shall bear thee  
The flowers that waved in the Egyptian hair  
Of Pharaoh's daughter ! Look upon that mother—  
Listen, ye slaves, who gaze on her distress,  
And turn to dwell with clamorous descant,

And prying eye, on some strange small device  
Upon her chains. In no imperial feature,  
In no sublime perfection, is she less  
Than the world's empress, the earth's paragon,  
Except these bonds. These bonds! Break them. Unbind,  
Unbind Andromeda! She was not born  
To stand and shiver in the northern blast,  
Or fester on a foreign rock, or bear  
Rude licence of the unrespective waves.  
She is a queen! a goddess! a king's daughter!  
What though her loveliness defied the heavens;  
Unbind her, she shall fill them! Man, unbind her,  
And, goddess as she is, she owns thee, loves thee,  
Crowns thee! And is there none to break thy chains,  
My country? Is there none, sons of my mother?  
Strike, and the spell is broken. You behold her  
Suppliant of suppliants. Strike! and she shall stand  
Forth in her awful beauty, more divine  
Than death or mortal sorrow; clothing all  
The wrecks and ruins of disastrous days  
In old-world glory—even as the first spring  
After the deluge. Why should we despair?  
The heroes whom your fathers took for gods,  
Walk'd in her brightness, and received no more  
Than she gives back to you, who are not heroes,  
And have not yet been men. They toil'd and bled,  
And knew themselves immortal, when they hung  
Their names upon *her* altars; ask'd no fate  
But that which you inherit and disdain  
To call it heritage—subdued the world,

And with superior scorn heard its lip-service,  
And bade it call them ROMANS, and believe  
Earth had no haughtier name. Be not deceived.  
They stood on Roman, you on Parman ground,  
But yet this mould is the same ground they stood on.  
The evening wind, that passes by us now,  
To *their* proud senses was the evening wind.  
These are the hills, and these the plains, whereby  
The Roman shepherd fed his golden flocks,  
And kings look'd from their distant lands, and thought him  
Greater than they. The masters of the world  
Heard the same streams that speak to you, its slaves.  
These rocks were their rocks, and their Roman spring  
Brought, year by year, the very self-same blossoms,  
(The self-same blossoms, but they stood for crowns.)  
The flowers beneath their feet had the same perfume  
As those you tread on—do they scorn your tread?  
They saw your stars; and when the sun went down,  
The mountains on his face set the same signs  
To their eyes as to yours. O thou unseen  
Rome of their love,—immaculate and free!  
Thou who didst sit amid the Apennines,  
And looking forth upon the conscious world,  
Which heard thee and obey'd, beheld thy children  
From sea to sea! Yes, we are here, my mother,  
And here beside thy mountain throne we call thee  
Ascend, thou uncrown'd queen! Yet a few days,  
Yet a few days, and all is past. Behold  
Even now, the harvest seedeth, and the ear  
Bends rich with death. Yet a few days, my mother,

And thou shalt hear the shouting of the reapers,  
 And we who stary the sickle shall sing out  
 The harvest-home. Nay, look not in me, mother,  
 Look not in me in thy sublime despair :  
 Thou shalt be free. I see it all, my mother,  
 Thy golden fetters, thy primed limbs,  
 Thy cold, thy scorch, thine agonies, thy scars,  
 And thine undying beauty. Yes, all, all  
 And all for us and by us. Look not on me.  
 Ay! lift thy mother's hands to heaven, earth hath not  
 Room for so vast a wrong. Thou shalt be free.  
 Thou shalt be free, before the heavens I swear it !  
 By thy long agony, thy bloody sweat,  
 Thy passion of a thousand years, thy glory,  
 Thy pride, thy shame, thy worlds subdued and lost.  
 Thou shalt be free ! By thine eternal youth,  
 And coeternal utterless dishonour—  
 Past, present, future, life and death, all oaths,  
 Which may bind earth and heaven, mother, I swear it.  
 We know we have dishonour'd thee. We know  
 All thou canst tell the angels. At thy feet,  
 The feet where kings have trembled, we confess,  
 And weep ; and only bid thee live, my mother,  
 To see how we can die. Thou shalt be free !  
 By all our sins, and all thy wrongs we swear it.  
 We swear it, mother, by the thousand omens  
 That heave this pregnant time. Tempests for whom  
 The Alps lack wombs—quick earthquakes—hurricanes  
 That moan and chafe, and thunder for the light,  
 And must be native here. Hark, hark, the angel !

I see the birthday in the imminent skies !  
 Clouds break in fire. Earth yawns. The exulting thunder  
 Shouts hayoc to the whirlwinds. And men hear,  
 Amid the terrors of consenting storms,  
 Floods, rocking worlds, mad seas and rending mountains,  
 Above the infinite clash, one long great cry,  
 THOU SHALT BE FREE !

*[The audience have one by one stolen away. The MONK,  
 recovering from his enthusiasm, finds himself alone.]*

*The Monk.* Ah solitude ! and have I  
 Raved to the winds ? *[A Pause.]*

Bow not thy queenly head,  
 Beat not thy breast ; they do not leave *thee*, mother !  
 We have no strength to meet the offended terrors  
 Of thy chaste eyes. Yet a few days, my mother,  
 And when the fire of expiation burns,  
 Thou shalt confess thy children. Oh, bear with us.  
 Hath the set sun forsaken thee ? We know  
 All that thou art, and we are : and if, mother,  
 The unused weight of the ineffable knowledge  
 Bendeth our souls, forgive us. *[Another long pause.]*

Yes, *all* gone !

And not one word—one pitiful cheap word—  
 One look that might have brighten'd into promise !  
 All faint, pale, recreant, slavish, lost. No cur  
 That sniffs the distant bear, and sneaks downcast  
 With craven tail and miscreant trepidation  
 To kennel and to collar, could slink home  
 With a more prone abasement. *[Another long pause.]*  
 Kill me ! kill me !

Thine hour is not yet come. Then give me mine !  
 Thou must endure, my mother, I have taken  
 A meteor for the dawn. Thou must endure,  
 And toil, and weep.  
 Oh, thou offended majesty ! my heart  
 Beats here for thee. Strike it ! Thou must endure.  
 I may not, at the peril of my soul,  
 Give thee aught other counsel ; and I would not  
 For many souls that any man should dare  
 To give thee this and live. Alas ! when truth  
 Is treason, and the crime of what we do  
 Transcends all sins but the more damning guilt  
 Of doing aught beside. *[Another pause.*

Or is it, mother,  
 That thou hast chosen ill ? That I, the dreamer,  
 Catch not the language of these waking men ?  
 With our humanity infirm upon us.  
 My God ! it is a fearful thing to stand  
 Alone, beneath the weight of a great cause  
 And a propitious time ! *[Another pause.*

Mother ! *[A long pause.*

Be patient,  
 O thou eternal and upbraiding Presence,  
 Which fillest heaven and earth with witness ; be  
 What thou hast been : and, if thou canst, forgive  
 What I can not forgive ; and let me be  
 What I was. Take, take back this terrible sight !  
 This sight that passeth the sweet boundary  
 Of man's allotted world. Let me look forth  
 And see green fields, hills, trees, and soulless waters.

Give back my ignorance. Why should my sense  
 Be cursed with this intolerable knowledge ?  
 Let me go back to bondage. What am I,  
 That I am tortured to supernal uses,  
 Who have not died ; and see the sights of angels  
 With mortal eyes ? Unhand me, mother ! why  
 Must I, so many years removed from death,  
 Be young and have no youth ? What have I done  
 That all thy millions look on thee with smiles,  
 And I with madness ? Why must I be great ?  
 When did I ask this boon ? Why is the dull,  
 Smooth, unctuous current of contented baseness  
 Forbidden to me only ? What art thou,  
 Magician ! that who serves thee hath thenceforth  
 No part on earth beside ? That I am doom'd—  
 Am doom'd to preach in unknown tongues, and know  
 What no man will believe ? To strive, and weep,  
 And labour with impossible griefs and woes,  
 That kill me in the birth ? That I am thus,  
 That I am thus, who once was calm, proud, happy,—  
 Ay, you may smile, you ancient sorrows,—happy.  
 Stay ! happy ? And a slave ? *[A very long pause.*

If I must see thee,

If it must be, if it must be, my mother !  
 If it must be, and God vouchsafes the heart  
 No gift to unlearn truth ; if the soul never  
 Can twice be virgin ; if the eye that strikes  
 Upon the hidden path to the unseen  
 Is henceforth for two worlds ; if the sad fruit  
 Of knowledge dwells for ever on the lip,



And if thy face once seen, to me, O thou  
Unutterable sadness ! must henceforth  
Look day and night from all things ; grant me this,  
That thine immortal sorrow will remember  
How little we can grieve who are but dust.  
Make me the servant, not the partner, mother,  
Of woes, for whose omnipotence of pain  
I have no organs. Suffer that I give  
Time and endurance for impossible passion ;  
Perchance accumulated pangs may teach me  
One throe of thy distress. How canst thou think  
My soul can contain thine ?

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## SCENE II.

*Time and place as in SCENE I.*

FRANCESCA, *a young girl, one of the Auditors in SCENE I.*  
*has remained hidden among the trees. The Monk, silent,*  
*musings.*

*Francesca (musing).* While he yet spake I waited for a pause,  
And now, if I could dare to hear my voice  
In this most awful silence, it should pray  
That he would speak again. You heavens, you heavens,  
Lend me your language. This progressive thought,  
This unit-bearing speech, whose best exertion

Is but dexterity, the juggler's sleight,  
 That with facility of motion cheats  
 The eye, whose noblest effort can but haste  
 The single ball of phantasy, and make  
 Succession seem coincidence, is not  
 For such an hour. Lend me some tongue, you heavens,  
 Worthy of gods : in whose celestial sense  
 The present, past, and future of the soul  
 Sink down as one ; even as these dewdrops to-night  
 Fall from a thousand stars.

He hears. He turns.

Now, now, ye saints !

*The Monk (turning and perceiving her).* Lady, what wouldst  
 thou ?

[*She is silent.*]

Child,

What wouldst thou ?

*Francesca.* I have heard thee. Dost thou ask ?

*The Monk (pointing to the dancers in the far distance).* Did  
 they not hear ? Daughter, persuade me this,

And I will bless thee.

*Francesca (taking a flower from her breast).* Is that rose-  
 bud sweet ?

I pluck'd it from a thicket as I pass'd ;  
 One day, perhaps, some cottage plot ; but now  
 Given up to dominance of vulgar thorns,  
 And weeds of deadlier moral. Yet methinks  
 'Tis still a rose. Wilt thou receive it ?

*The Monk.*

Ay.

*Francesca.* I am that rose, my father, so accept  
 Me.

*The Monk.* Child, I will.

*Francesca.* I have heard much to-night  
Of Roman deeds, of sages, and of heroes,  
Of *sons* who loved, and *sons* who have betray'd.  
Hath Rome no daughters to repeat her beauty,  
Renew the model of old time, and teach  
Her sons to love the mother in the child ?  
Was Rome, my father, built and peopled by  
One sex ? The very marble of your ruins  
Looks masculine. In heart I roam about them,  
But wheresoe'er my female soul peers in  
—Even to the temple courts—some bearded image  
Cries Privilege. Doth Salique law entail  
The heritage of glory ? Is there nothing,  
Nothing, my father, in the work of freedom  
For woman's hand to do ?

*The Monk.* The past, that book  
Of demonstrated theorems, lies open.  
Why seek my poor unproved hypothesis,  
When God hath solved for thee ? Child, choose thy page.  
Here bleeds Lucretia. Rome hath now ten Tarquins  
(Ten Tarquins, but we call them dukes and kings).  
There, Arria. Many a Pœtus lives to-night  
Who would have given right joyfully to freedom  
The Roman heart that makes a sorry slave,  
If Arria would have shown him how to die.  
Virginia ! Appius—nay, we have no state  
Where Appius would have deign'd to be a despot.  
But that divine idea incarnate in  
Virginia's corse, and teeming in the blood

Which quickening in your Roman ground grew up  
 A national virginity—*that* glory,  
 Though it reach up to heaven, may make its footstool  
 Wherever there is earth enough to die on.  
 Remember her who——

*Francesca.*                      Hear me yet, my father,  
 And I will light thee to a sterner text  
 Than thou hast heart to preach from.

Yonder castle

Darkening the hill——

*The Monk.*                      Child, the days come when where  
 The deadliest stronghold of its lordliest keep  
 Spreads the dank flags, tear-damp, of its most dark  
 Detested dungeon, thou—*not I*—shalt see  
 The wild thyme and the bee.

*Francesca.*                      Is there nought writ  
 Of Tullia, who once drove the car of blood  
 Over her father's corse? Sir, from those walls  
 My father rules.

*The Monk (after some silence).*    Shall Paul stop preaching  
 lest

Eutychus sleep? In the Damascene way  
 Shall his eyes shut out light from heaven? Not though  
 It scorch them blind! Truth is a god, my child;  
 Rear thou the altar, he himself provides  
 The lamb. The great judge, Truth, who takes thy verdict,  
 Avenges a false finding though it save  
 Thy brother's soul. Truth is the equal sun,  
 Ripening no less the hemlock than the vine.  
 Truth is the flash that turns aside no more

For castle than for cot. Truth is a spear  
 Thrown by the blind. Truth is a Nemesis  
 Which leadeth her beloved by the hand  
 Through all things ; giving him no task to break  
 A bruised reed, but bidding him stand firm  
 Though she crush worlds.

*Francesca.*

Master ! I would serve Truth.

*The Monk (meditates, then speaks).* Oh Freedom ! ruddy  
 goddess of the hill,

Say, from that breezy ledge of genial rock,  
 Where, yet ere twilight, with thine eastward face  
 Turn'd to to-morrow's sunrise, thou hast laid  
 Thy joyous limbs, dew-bathed—which day scarce tames  
 To sleep—oh say, is this pale dreamer thine ?  
 Go home, poor child, thou hast thy burden ; I  
 Add nothing.

*Francesca.* Thou canst speak in parables,  
 Or with stern silence stifle the poor heart  
 That breathes thy words ; but, father, I will sit  
 Here at thy feet.

*The Monk.* So does my dog ; but do I  
 Take him to council ?

*Francesca.* Yet thou givest him  
 To watch thee day and night. Grant me no less.

*The Monk.* Oh tyrant's daughter, lovest thou Roman thus ?

*Francesca.* Ay.

*The Monk (musing).* Can the heart be less than what it  
 holds ?

The fetter'd slave that in his fetters slays  
 His lord, has strength to break them. Arms that break

Their chains have strength to throw them in the sea.  
 Perchance I have judged ill. Yes. Unattaint,  
 Perchance, the Arethusan blood of Rome  
 Hath coursed the conduit of a tyrant's veins,  
 And from the fetid entrails of the earth  
 Springs up Diana's fountain !

Soul, soul, soul,  
 Wilt thou again believe ? Are figs of thistles ?  
 Hast thou not tasted of the Dead-Sea fruits ?  
 The clouds are midnight with to-morrow's storm :  
 Wilt thou launch freedom in a cockle-shell ?  
 What ! Patriot, dost thou pay the gold of Rome  
 For phantom ship to skim aerial waves  
 Or desert mirage ? Bah ! what falconer  
 Shall man this butterfly-hawk ? Will that nice beak  
 Stoop to a bloody lure ?

Poor child, poor child,  
 The feeblest tongue that freemen use will deafen  
 These ears where every word went bowing in !  
 These pamper'd ears, born in the purple chamber  
 Of silken state, these soft voluptuous ears,  
 Dainty and fancy-fed, that of the tribe  
 Of many-visaged language, know alone  
 That bastard and emasculated speech  
 That does court-embassies. That perfumed minion,  
 Which runs the powder'd errands of intrigue ;  
 That slave-born slave, that audible obeisance,  
 Which on the silver plate of compliment  
 Exchanges rotten hearts. That sleek thrice-curl'd  
 Prim arbiter of vile proprieties,

Whose wax-light days begin and end with fashion ;  
 That velvet impotent, whose effete passions  
 Wait smiling the fantastic lusts of kings.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

How shall *she* bear the sound when a strong land  
 In the rude health of freedom shall say *Rome* !  
 Go home, girl, thou hast nought in me, nor I  
 In thee.

*Francesca.* Thy words stand 'twixt my home and me.

*The Monk.* Hence ! Thou shalt pass them. Freedom's  
 sentinels

Challenge no feathers.

*Francesca.* I have heard thy fears,  
 And fear not. Do the damn'd, my father, shrink  
 At voice of angel ? Shall not the small sense  
 Of feeblest child sustain the crash of doom ?

*The Monk.* The day is thine.

There was a Greek sage once, who stood in spirit  
 Sublime beside his outraged flesh and blood,  
 The only calm beholder. He and thou,  
 Raw girl ! have come into one heritage ;  
 He in grey hairs, weary and wise, as sage ;  
 Thou in the flush of unreflecting days,  
 As woman. With bowed head I stand before thee,  
 Child ! teach me.

*Francesca.* Mock me not, oh father, mock  
 Me not. Is it so great a boon to die ?

*The Monk.* Have what thou wilt—do what thou wilt.

*Francesca* (*throwing herself at his feet*). He takes me !  
 You Heavens ! he takes me. Master, Teacher, Lord !

*The Monk.* I take thee not.

*Francesca*                    Thou canst not drive me from thee !  
I see it all ! He would even crush the fly  
That hums about him. No, my father, no,  
I die not thus.

*Monk.*                    I take thee not, brave girl,  
Thy *Country* claims thee. That great Rome, for whom  
Many have *fallen*, but how few have *died*.  
That generous country, which, while other lands  
Build up their bulwarks of their children's dust,  
Of her best sons, in her worst need, asks only  
Apotheosis. Dost thou weep to exchange  
The mortal for the eternal ?

*Francesca.*                    Teach me how  
To serve her.

*The Monk.* Pay her tithes of the rich love  
That bore thee to her feet. That love which triumph'd  
In victory like his of Underwalden,  
Who buried in his own unconquer'd breast  
Th' opposing spears.

*Francesca.*                    Father, I am a poor  
Weak ignorant. Thy voice falls on my heart  
Like heavenly music, but alas, I know not  
What words they sing to it in heaven. I pray thee  
Give eyes to this blind trouble in my soul,  
Set me some task—nay, do not spare me, master,  
Some task at which thy bravest is not brave—  
Teach me some lesson, in our woman's language,  
Of action and endurance ; I will say it,  
That thou shalt bless thy scholar !



*The Monk.*

Child ! child ! child !

Thou art yet young, and foot of babe can do  
No sacrilege. But curb these proud beliefs,  
There comes a time, when holy bounds o'er-stept  
May blast thee. Child, freedom hath sanctuaries,  
Wherein the chaste hands of her best high-priest  
Tremble to serve. Slave ! merry smiling slave !  
Dancing an hour since to the shameful music  
Of thine own chains—

*Francesca.*

Oh father, father, spare me !

Make me her lowest servant—

*The Monk.*

Child, not so.

How should I judge thee ? Enoch was the first,  
But not the last translated. To both worlds  
—The inner and the outer—we come naked.  
The very noblest heart on earth, hath oft  
No better lot than *to deserve*. And yet,  
What laurell'd impotent shall show his head  
Beside that uncrown'd giant ?

No, my daughter,

I think thou hast a place beside the throne.  
Behold it near the skies : the golden steps  
Of human toil that reach it, and the angels  
Ascending and descending. Wilt thou climb ?

*Francesca.* Oh father !

*The Monk.*

Let me breathe thee round the base

Of the celestial steep. I have a task  
Such as becomes the neophyte of freedom ;  
It shall be thine.

*Francesca.*

I clasp thy knees, my father.

*The Monk.* Brave girl, it is a Tyro's task ; a baptism  
That will not drown. The very holiday-work  
Of glory—

*Francesca.* May I do no nobler ?

*The Monk.* Hear it.

Go forth at dawn—as they of old, go forth—  
Carry nor purse, nor scrip, nor shoes, salute  
By the way no man. Through this sad broad land,  
Even from the Alps to the three seas, cry out,  
“Rome is at hand !”

*Francesca.* Father, no more ?

*The Monk.* No more.

*Francesca.* No word of War, Glory, Shame, Tyrants ?

Nothing

Of this Rome's feature ?

*The Monk.* Did John Baptist know  
Whom he foreran ? Daughter, thy chains lie there,  
Not two hours off. No law forbids thee wear them.

*Francesca.* Forgive me, father, I am thine, all thine,  
But—nay, frown not—what if men tire of this  
Strange cuckoo note ?

*The Monk.* Do two hearts hear the cuckoo  
With the same beat ? Lend me thy lute, dear girl ;  
There was a song that in my wanderings  
I heard in other years. A wayward song  
That caught the murmur of the waterfall,  
By which I sang it. But no matter. 'Twill  
Find its way where the brawny words of manhood  
Might be too rude. I would, my poor disciple,  
I had some foot more fit than an arm'd heel

To tread the dwelling of thy woman's soul.  
 And while we commune, daughter,—for alas,  
 A patriot militant has no to-morrows—  
 Hear this first lesson. It may be remember'd  
 When I am not. Stern duties need not speak  
 Sternly. He who stood firm before the thunder,  
 Worshipp'd the still small voice. Let the great world  
 That bears us—the all-preaching world—instruct thee,  
 That teacheth every man, because her precepts  
 Are seen, not heard. Oh, worship her. Fear not  
 Whilst thou hast open eyes, and ears for all  
 The simplest words she saith. Deaf, blind, to these,  
 Despair. That worst incurable, perchance  
 Some voice may heal hereafter, but none here.  
 For before every man, the world of beauty,  
 Like a great artist, standeth day and night,  
 With patient hand retouching in the heart  
 God's defaced image. Reverence sights and sounds,  
 Daughter ; be sure the wind among the trees  
 Is whispering wisdom.

Now assist me, lute.

*[The MONK sings—recitativo—touching the lute at intervals.]*

There went an incense through the land one night,  
 Through the hush'd holy land, when tired men slept.

*[Interlude of music.]*

The haughty sun of June had walk'd, long days,  
 Through the tall pastures which, like mendicants,  
 Hung their sear heads and sued for rain : and he  
 Had thrown them none. And now it was high hay-time,  
 Through the sweet valley all her flowery wealth

At once lay low, at once ambrosial blood  
Cried to the moonlight from a thousand fields.  
And through the land the incense went that night,  
Through the hush'd holy land when tired men slept.  
It fell upon the sage ; who with his lamp  
Put out the light of heaven. He felt it come  
Sweetening the musty tomes, like the fair shape  
Of that one blighted love, which from the past  
Steals oft among his mouldering thoughts of wisdom.  
And SHE came with it, borne on airs of youth ;  
Old days sang round her, old memorial days,  
She crown'd with tears, they dress'd in flowers, all faded—  
And the night-fragrance is a harmony  
All through the old man's soul. Voices of eld,  
The home, the church upon the village green,  
Old thoughts that circle like the birds of Even  
Round the grey spire. Soft sweet regrets, like sunset  
Lighting old windows with gleams day had not.  
Ghosts of dead years, whispering old silent names  
Through grass-grown pathways, by halls mouldering now.  
Childhood—the fragrance of forgotten fields ;  
Manhood—the *unforgotten* fields whose fragrance  
Pass'd like a breath ; the time of buttercups,  
The fluttering time of sweet forget-me-nots ;  
The time of passion and the rose—the hay-time  
Of that last summer of hope ! The old man weeps,  
The old man weeps.  
His aimless hands the joyless books put by ;  
As one that dreams and fears to wake, the sage  
With vacant eye stifles the trembling taper,

Lets in the moonlight—and for once is wise.

*[Interlude of music.]*

There went an incense through the midnight land,  
Through the hush'd holy land where tired men slept.  
It fell upon a simple cottage child,  
Laid where the lattice open'd on the sky,  
And she look'd up and said, Those flowers the stars  
Smelt sweet to-night. God rest her ignorance !  
There went an incense through the land one night,  
Through the hush'd holy land when tired men slept ;  
It passed above a lonely vale, and fell  
Upon a poet looking out for signs  
In heaven and earth, and went into his soul,  
And like a fluttering bird among sweet strings,  
Made strange Æolian music wild and dim.

*[Interlude.]*

A haggard man, silent beneath the stars,  
Stood with bare head, a hasty step withdrawn  
From a low tatter'd hut, wherefrom the faint  
Low wail of famine, like a strange night-bird,  
Cried on the air. He had come forth to give  
His dying child, his youngest one, repose.  
“ Father,” it said, “ you weep, I cannot die.”  
There went an incense through the land that night,  
Through the hush'd holy land when tired men slept ;  
It came upon his soul, and went down deep,  
Deep to his heart, and threw the new-made hay  
Upon the coals of fire that ember'd there.  
And by the rising flame came pictures fair,  
Of old ancestral fields that strangers till,

And patrimony that the spoiler reaps.  
 Then falls the flame upon the pallet near,  
 And forward on the canvas of the night,  
 To the wild father's eye, lights up that landscape  
 Of love and health and hope which yesterday  
 The poorest crumbs of the oppressor's feast  
 Might buy. Oh God! how coarse a crust may be  
 The bread of life. He breathes the night-balm in,  
 And breathes it back the red-hot smoke of vengeance!

[*Musical interlude.*]

There was a lonely mother and one babe,  
 —A moon with one small star in all her heaven—  
 Too like the moon, the wan and weary moon,  
 In pallor, beauty, all, alas! but change.  
 Through six long months of sighs that moon unwaning  
 Had risen and set beside the little star.  
 And now the little star, whom all the dews  
 Of heaven refresh not, westers to its setting,  
 Out of the moonlight to be dark for ever.  
 O'er the hush'd holy land where tired men sleep,  
 There went an incense through the night. It fell  
 Upon the mother, and she slept—the babe,  
 It smiled and dream'd of paradise.

Thanks, listener.

I am a sorry minstrel. Had my art  
 Been echo to the nature in thy face  
 We had heard nobler strains.

*Francesca (sadly).*

Alas! there only

Is thy child false.

*The Monk.*

Ah! sighing still?

*Francesca.*

Dear father,

One more forgiveness ! Spirits half cast out  
Tear the possess'd and cry. Indulgent master,  
Complete thy miracle.

*The Monk (severely).* Hath the possess'd  
Faith to be healed ?

*Francesca.* I could do all for love,  
Bleed, die for it,—even to the second death—  
I could, I would, I *will*—but to give flesh  
For marble ; to be crush'd out of the earth  
By some cold image falling from the clouds !

*The Monk.* Woman, is this a place for earthly passion ?

*Francesca.* Not passion, no, not passion. Human light  
In the stern idol's eyes—a heart, a pulse  
To sanctify the embrace—the love that throbs  
Belief—Oh master, master !

*The Monk.* I am patient,  
Strange priestess—how long are these mysteries ?

*Francesca (pauses.)* Sir, they are even now ended. I say not  
Whether the fire be out upon the altar,  
Or if the holy portals are self-closed  
Against unpitying eyes ; but—they are ended.

*The Monk.* Child, I have wrong'd thee.

*Francesca.* Father, say not so.  
They are not wrong'd who have no rights. And what  
Have I before thee ?

*The Monk.* More, my daughter, more  
Than thou or I remembered. Do the stars  
Frown on us ? Yet that cloud of wayward wishes  
The world sent up at vesper-time hangs now  
Fevering the heaven between their eyes and ours.  
Daughter, forget my sins. Fond Hector, arm'd,

Smiled a paternity too terrible  
 Even for a hero's child. The earnest soul  
 Drawing a sword is warrior cap-a-pied,  
 And this voice, strife-strain'd, catches ill to-night  
 The pitch of the confessional. Brave girl,  
 Canst thou trust twice ?

*Francesca.* Do I trust God the less  
 For an unanswer'd prayer ? Command me, master ;  
 'Twas the Promethean madness that essay'd  
 To warm a clay heart with celestial fire.  
 I am content to serve.

*The Monk.* Nay, tell me all.

*Francesca.* Not so, my father. No, thou shalt not cross  
 This threshold. No, thou shalt not stoop so low  
 As to the lintel of a heart like mine !  
 Nay, tempt me not. I have received my sorrow,  
 And am content. The sin was too delicious  
 For feebler retribution. But, oh, once  
 To bear what I have borne this hour sufficeth  
 For one life.

*The Monk.* Thou poor trembling child, be calm.  
 Truth, partial to her sex, made woman free  
 Even of her inmost cell ; but man walks round  
 The outer courts, and by the auspices  
 And divinations of the augur reason,  
 Knows her chaste will, her voice, and habit better  
 —With a sure science, more abstract and pure—  
 Than ye who run by instinct to her knee.  
 Answer me, child, perchance——

*Francesca.* Nay, father, nay,



I am not worthy of thine auguries.  
 I will confess. I fear'd—forgive me, father,  
 I did fear that as there *have* been who flew  
 Wild with their own inevitable shadow ;  
 The dark monotony from day to day,  
 Of words that had no image in my brain,—  
 Great everpresent names that stand for nothing  
 In heaven or earth, sounds, awful, awful sounds,  
 For shapes I cannot see, haunting my ears,  
 Might drive me mad. Is not a whisper, father,  
 Fearful at night ? Are there not some, my father,  
 Who have been doom'd to drag a skeleton  
 Rattling behind them ? Oh, you heavens, you heavens,  
 I shall go mad.

*The Monk (musingly).* Ay, child, those rank weeds,  
 words,

Exhaust the soul.

*Francesca.* . . . A little love, dear master,  
 It seemed to me if I could know and love  
 —Though afar off—this Rome of which thou speakest,  
 It would make life of death.

*The Monk.* Yes, thou must love her,  
 There must be fire from heaven or hell to burn  
 Offerings that burnt were incense, but neglected  
 Pollute the winds. Thou must love Rome, my daughter,  
 As she loves thee.

*Francesca.* Oh, can she love me ? How,  
 Oh, tell me how the mortal can win looks  
 From the eternal ? How the daughters of men  
 Drew angels down ? Alas, thou jestest, father,

She—the espoused of ages—how shall I  
Woo her ?

*The Monk.* Even as thou makest other loves.  
Watch her and wait upon her ; let her share  
Thy morn and eve, and in the sleep of noon  
Dream of her. Have no shame to see her by  
Thy bed at night, and to undress thine heart  
In her sad gaze.

In the dull ways of men  
Sitting and walking lonely, let *her* image  
Be thy attendant spirit, and interpret  
All things into her language. Haply passing  
A ruin'd garden, all of broken statues,  
Temples o'er-turn'd, sweet haunts of love and pleasure  
Defiled and trodden in the outraged earth,  
And blossoms like the noon for radiance, trampled  
By foul insulting feet : while over all  
The appealing music of wronged solitudes,  
Of shades deflower'd and sanctities profaned,  
Hangs like a dewy exhalation—then  
Look up and say, My country !

Wandering through  
The lovely ruin, if thy step should strike  
On some fair column ; prone and moss-interr'd,  
Fit for a god to stand on ; one of those  
That found amid a desert's sands alone,  
Should of the wealth of its one witness give  
Another tome to history—be reverent,  
Tread as thy feet were among graves—and say,  
My country !

Or, oh prince's daughter, if  
In some proud street, leaning 'twixt night and day  
From out thy palace balcony to meet  
The breeze—that tempted by the hush of eve,  
Steals from the fields about a city's shows,  
And like a lost child, scared with wondering, flies  
From side to side in touching trust and terror,  
Crying sweet country names and dropping flowers—  
Leaning to meet that breeze, and looking down  
To the so silent city, if below  
With dress disorder'd and dishevell'd passions  
Streaming from desperate eyes that flash and flicker  
Like corpse-lights, (eyes that once were known on high,  
Morning and night, as welcome there as thine,) .  
And brow of trodden snow, and form majestic  
That might have walk'd unchallenged through the skies,  
And reckless feet, fitful with wine and woe,  
And songs of revel that fall dead about  
Her ruin'd beauty—sadder than a wail—  
(As if the sweet maternal eve for pity  
Took out the joy, and, with a blush of twilight,  
Uncrown'd the Bacchanal)—some outraged sister  
Passeth, be patient, think upon yon heaven,  
Where angels hail the Magdalen, look down  
Upon that life in death and say—My country !

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## SCENE III.

*The neighbourhood of Milan, during a popular Emeute.*

*A great band of Insurgents, armed, and singing, pass over.*

*The MONK stands near.*

*All (chanting as they march).* Who would drone on in a  
dull world like this ?

Heaven costs no more than a pang and a sigh ;  
Dash off the fetters that bind us from bliss,  
Fair fall the freeman who foremost shall die !  
Death's a siesta, lads, take it who can !  
Wave the proud banners that wave for Milan !

Chanted in song, and remember'd in story,  
Sunk but to rise—like the sun in the wave—  
Grandly the fallen shall sleep in his glory,  
Proudly his country shall weep at his grave,  
And hallow like relics each clod where there ran  
The blood of that hero who died for Milan !

Holy his name shall be, blest by the brave and free,  
Kept like a saint's-day, the hour when he died !  
The mother that bore him, the maid that bends o'er him  
Shall weep, but the tears shall be rich tears of pride.  
Shout, brothers, shout for the first falling man,  
Shout for the gallant that dies for Milan !



That sues her? Do you think I make my council  
Of way-side dangles? Dost betray me, fellow?  
Thou pale-faced german knave, if thou art aught  
That man may name unblushing, hence and bring me  
The leaders of this crew.

*One Soldier to another.* Go fetch the captain  
Of the tenth troop.

*The Monk.* Friend, fetch ten thousand captains,  
And march them here to march them back again;  
What! dost thou think Milan's great doom is meat  
For mouths like thine? Hence, bring your general,  
And bid him—as he values absolution  
For all that army of unshriven souls  
That hope to make their beds in paradise—  
Appear with such attendance as befits  
The majesty of freedom. Hence, and tell him  
I can show where Milan's great foe is flagrant,  
And swear upon my priestly faith, this night  
He shall behold him! [*Exit a Soldier.*]

*Enter General and crowd of Troops.*

*General.* Sir, and reverend father,  
Thou wilt forgive me if I am deceived—  
A straggler of our army brought—but now—  
An imminent commandment. Was it thine?

*The Monk.* Mine.

*General.* We do trust thou hast not wrong'd us, father;  
Each passing moment that goes by us now  
Is full of lives.

*The Monk.* I have not wrong'd you. Hear me.  
You say you combat for your country—mine,

Yours, every man's in whom the proud high blood  
 Of the old time still struggles with the present,  
 And throbs and blushes at degenerate days ;  
 The country of the Cæsars, and the saints,  
 And, better still, the land of stirring deeds,  
 Done by rude hands, and heads as yet uncrown'd  
 In earth or heaven ; the lady of the kingdoms—  
 The soil on which the gods came down, confounding  
 Their heaven with ours ;—restore me if I wander  
 From your own words—you strike for this dear country ?

*All.* Die for it !

*The Monk.* And the tide that flow'd from those  
 Old Roman veins like empire, so that where  
 The Roman bled he ruled—the blood that soak'd  
 His sovereignty into the land he fell on,  
 Flows in you, and you feel it ?

*General.* Reverend father,  
 Time hastes—the news—thine oath—we must hence—

*The Monk.* Peace !  
 Wilt thou direct my gifts, rebellious child ?

[*Turning to the Crowd.*

Say, will you hear me ? Will you know the spot  
 Where the foe lurks I swore to show you ?

*All.* Speak !

*The Monk.* You feel the pulses of the Roman blood,  
 You think the masters of the world begot  
 Kings, and not slaves—you come forth with the same  
 Looks, passions, sinews, souls and giant hearts,  
 Which in your sires stood round your ancient heroes,  
 And lifted them to glory on their shields,

—Those heroes worshipp'd by the startled earth,  
Who seeing them above you, call'd them gods—  
You know the same grand instinct of vast empire,  
You stand upon the same Italian ground,  
You stand on that same ground, the same proud people,  
And the inheritors of ancient worlds,  
Shout for Milan ! What ! will you pay your lives  
To buy a freedom girt by fewer acres  
Than your old consuls would have thrown away  
Upon a birth-day gift ? What, has this land,  
This Italy, grown smaller, and lacks ground  
For such a temple as it once upbore ?  
Or in your base hearts, shrunk with shameful days,  
Is there no space to build a Roman glory ?  
Go to ! you feeble sons of feeble days,  
You that would totter with the very name  
By which men call'd your sires ! Go to, you pigmies,  
Who have no more resource in your dwarf nerves,  
To know the squalor of your futile limbs,  
Than you have sight or soul or sense to compass  
The awful stature of a Roman people !  
Why do I speak of glory ? Italy,  
This Italy, which in its length and breadth  
Scarce served your fathers for a throne to sit on,  
Confounds their children with its vast horizon !  
And the posterity of those who counted  
Conquests by continents, weigh'd out dominion  
By hemispheres, and cast a score of kingdoms  
As dust to balance the unequal scale,  
Wage comfit combats at a carnival !



Coin fatherlands and farthings ; and step out  
 Their mimic royalties, and make toy princes  
 Glorious in gilt and gingerbread for kings  
 At school to play with. Husbandmen in crowns,  
 Great in the lordship of a Roman field,  
 Affect the despot, and to trembling townships  
 Nod sovereignty ; with equal hand create  
 A constitution, country, and court-cook,  
 Will loyalties, and point with awful finger  
 Which hedge and ditch shall bound a patriotism !  
 While Romans smile, and sons of Cæsar farm  
 Well pleased what Cæsar would have deem'd too strait  
 To breed his wild boars for a hunting day,  
 And call it Empire !

*Enter fresh crowds of Soldiers shouting,*

*Soldiers.* Long live the republic !

Long live the commonwealth of Lombardy !

*The Monk.* Long live eternal Rome ! long live that Rome  
 Which is not dead but sleepeth ! long live Rome !

Men, this is the great year of resurrection !

All who are in their graves shall hear his voice,

And come forth ! That which twenty centuries hence

Lay down a hero, shall rise up a god !

Shout, countrymen ! and wake the graves ; shout, ROME !

REPUBLIC ! RISE !

*Many voices.* Down with him, down with him. Viva  
 Milano !

*General.* A hearing, comrades !

*Many.* Peace ! the General speaks !

*General.* Priest, at thy peril——

*Many.* At thy peril, priest !

*General.* Priest, at thy peril, cease these timeless babblings,  
Respect thine oath and life. Show us the foe !

*Soldiers.* The foe, the foe, the foe,——

*The Monk.* Each silent man,  
When I cry Rome ! Each false, base-blooded shouter,  
When you cry Lombardy !

*Soldiers.* Base-blooded ! false !  
Base-blooded ! false ! give him a ball in the mouth !  
Milan ! Milan ! up muskets !

*General.* Shoulder arms !

*The Monk.* Each self-judged helot, pleased to toil, a Goth,  
When he might rule, a Roman ! Rome ? Rome ? Rome ?  
Bah ! by what witchcraft should you know that name,  
You Tuscans, Luccans, Florentines, Sardinians,  
Parmans, Placentians, Paduans and—slaves ?

*Soldiers.* Spear him—a pike, a pike !

*Some.* Hear the priest !

*Others (with great uproar).* Stone him,  
Stone him——

*The Monk.* I am a Roman. Let some Vandal  
Cast the first stone.

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## SCENE IV.

*Moonlight.*

FRANCESCA *alone, musing, sitting on a bank beneath trees.*  
CECCO, *a friend, enters unperceived, at the close of her soliloquy.*

*Francesca.*                    I will but live in twilight,  
I will seek out some lone egerian grove,  
Where sacred and o'er-greeting branches shed  
Perpetual eve, and all the cheated hours  
Sing vespers. And beside a sullen stream,  
Ice-cold at noon, my shadowy self shall sit,  
Crown'd with dull wreaths of middle-tinted flowers ;  
With sympathetic roses, wan with weeping  
For April sorrows ; frighten'd harebells, pale  
With thunder ; last, half-scented honeysuckle,  
That like an ill-starr'd child hides its brown head  
Through the long summer banquet, but steals late  
To wander through the fragments of the feast,  
And glad us with remember'd words that fell  
From guests of beauty ; sunburnt lilies, grey  
Wind-whispering ilex, and whatever leaves  
And changeling blossoms Flora, half-asleep,  
Makes paler than the sun and warmer than the moon !  
Was ever slave so dark and cold as I ?

Ah cruel, cruel night ! the very stars  
 Put me to shame ! I spur my soul all day  
 With thoughts of tyrants, woes and chains, and curse  
 As oft my pallid and ill-blooded nature,  
 That will not rage. Oh for some separate slave  
 To pity every vassal by ! Some tyrant  
 By whom I might set down of all oppressors  
 That they are thus and thus ! Oh that some hand,  
 Oh that some one hand, faint and fetter-wrung,  
 Would thrust its clanking wrongs before my eyes,  
 And I could bleed to break them !

And thou ! country !

Thou stern and awful god, of which my reason  
 Preaches infallibly, but which no sense  
 Bears witness to—I would thou hadst a shape.  
 It might be dwarf, deform'd, maim'd,—anything,  
 So it was thine ; and it should stand to me  
 For beauty. And my soul should wait on it,  
 And I would train my fancies all about it,  
 'Till growing to its fashion, and most nurtured  
 With smiles and tears they strengthen'd into love.  
 But—Santo—this indefinite dim presence  
 I cannot worship. O thou dear apostle,  
 Oh what a patriot could Francesca be  
 If *thou* wert Rome ! Oh what a fond disciple  
 Should his tongue have whose only eloquence  
 Was praise of thee ! To what a pile of vengeance  
 One look of retribution in thine eye  
 Were torch enough ! Be still, my heart, be still !  
 Ah wilful, wilful heart, dost thou refuse ?

Nay, be appeased—I bid thee silence, lest  
 Consenting cheeks attest how well thou sayest !  
 Too late, too late. Nay, do you crave, you blushes,  
 Escort of spoken passion, to interpret  
 Your beauties to the moon, which, pale with love  
 And watching for the never-coming night,  
 Mistakes them for some rosy cloud of dawn,  
 And ends her vigil? Heart, have all thy will !  
 Santo, I love thee ! love thee ! love thee ! love thee !  
 Santo, I love thee ! oh, thou wild word love !  
 Thou bird broke loose ! I could say on and on,  
 And feel existence but to speak and hear.  
 Santo, I love thee ! Hear ! Francesca loves thee,  
 Santo, I love thee ! oh, my heart, my heart,  
 My heart, thou Arab mad with desert-thirst,  
 In sight of water !—think upon the sands,  
 Thou leaping trembling lunatic, and keep  
 Some strength to reach the well.

*Cecco (approaching).*

What voice is this,

That calls upon a traitor ?

*Francesca.*

Thou base stranger,

Thou coward spy ! one that will call on him,  
 Though her tongue pay the forfeit ! Yes, vile Austrian,  
 I call him, I,—I, who to save my soul  
 Would scorn to call upon the milk-eyed saints  
 That look from Heaven upon your German deeds  
 And do not blight you !

*Cecco (drawing nearer).* Sister Roman ! well

And timely met.

*Francesca.* Cecco ! thy lips are traitors,

And mouth to German fashions. I believed  
The hour I sometime prayed for, come already,  
And thee an Austrian spy.

*Cecco.* Forgive me that  
I show'd my passport at a friendly gate,  
Despair is a poor courtier. I may waste  
Only so many words as may demand  
Assistance, if thou hast it, and if not  
God-speed ! It wants but three short hours of dawn,  
I swore to Santo he should have a Bible  
Two hours before his time.

*Francesca.* It wants three hours  
Of dawn—thou swore'st he should have a Bible  
Two hours before his time—*Cecco*—

*Cecco.* Be brief,  
For pity. Is there any bold man near  
Who has and who dare lend ?

*Francesca.* Be brief, for pity—  
Thou swore'st he should have—you heavens, you heavens,  
What do your clouds hide ?

*Cecco.* I must leave thee.

*Francesca (to Cecco, who essays to go : she shows a poignard)*

*Cecco,*

Tell me ; tell all. Ah *Cecco*—nay, look here  
In the moonlight—saints ! I can use it !

*Cecco.* Strange,  
Wild girl, how ? know'st thou not as well as I  
Vittorio preaching to some Milanese  
Who would be patriots if they knew but how,  
Spent precious hours in which the German foe

Slipt from the snare ? whereat brave Roderigo—  
 A gallant sword—the greatest libertine  
 In Milan—seized him. In the castle dungeon  
 He lies since noon, and with the coming dawn  
 Dies.

*Francesca.* Dies, dies,—who dies?—pray you, friend, say on ;  
 I am not wont to wander.

*[She sinks gently to the earth. Cecco reclines her on a  
 bank and hastens on. After awhile Francesca sits up.]*

This is well !

That last waltz spent me. Let me see, what gallant  
 Danced young Francesca down ? Nay, he'll boast rarely !  
 Yet it seems, long ago—long, long ago.  
 Such dreamless sleep ! Thou melancholy moon,  
 What ! have I caught my death-damp of the dews ?  
 Death,—death,—ah !—

*[A long pause ; she sits with her head in her hands.]*

A gallant sword—the greatest libertine  
 In Milan ?—yes, yes,—Roderigo,—yes—

*[Another long pause.]*

He lies since noon—ay, in the castle dungeon,  
 And with the dawn—No, no, thou pitiless sun !  
 Thou durst not rise ! Oh sea, if thou hast waves,  
 Quench him !

*[Another long pause.]*

A gallant sword—the greatest libertine  
 In Milan.—Ah—the greatest libertine ?  
 Who says I am not fair ? Ye gods ! I curse you :  
 Why do ye tempt me ?

*[A very long pause. Cecco passes in returning.]*

It is over, Cecco ;

Cecco, I tell thee it is past, is past.  
 Santo is free. Look thou that horses wait  
 Near the east gate by sunrise. At the walls  
 My mission ends. Doubt not. I am not mad,  
 I hope I am not. Yet one hour of frenzy  
 Would take me from this hell to heaven. But Cecco,  
 I would not buy oblivion, at this moment,  
 With a right hand that shakes.

I tell thee, haste !

Gaze not on me ! with all the fiends about me,  
 I have not sat an hour stock-still for nought ;  
 Begone !

[*Exit* CECOCO.]

## SCENE V.

*The Common Room of an Inn.*

*Enter, by different doors, a number of Students and Burghers,  
 shouting to each other as they meet and greet.*

*Each and all.* The news ? The news ? The news ? The  
 news ? The news ?

*One.* I've a good tale.

*Another.* I better.

*Another.* I the best.

*Another.* Mine caps superlative.

*Another.* Hurrah ! and mine's

A feather in the cap.



*Another.* Boys! mine's the bird  
 That grew the feather.  
*The first.* Hear me for my age.  
*The second.* Me for my honesty.  
*The third.* Me for my beauty!  
*The fourth.* Me for my wit.  
*The fifth.* Me for my eloquence.  
*The sixth.* Me  
 For all these.  
*Another.* Me for none of them, since naked  
 Beggars are best arm'd.  
*Enter Giacco.* Halloo!  
*All.* Giacco! Giacco!  
 Brave Giacco!  
*Giacco.* Here's a tale, my comrades!  
*All.* Hear him!  
*One.* Hurrah! trust Giacco for a pretty wench  
 And a good story.  
*Another.* Nay, for certain, Milan  
 Has no such tell-tale.  
*Another.* Lads! a cup all round,  
 Giacco does best!  
*One (aside).* Pray Mary! he knows mine;  
 Every good saint! it must be mine.  
*Some.* Now Giacco!  
*Others.* Attend! attend! attend!  
*Others.* Silence! Now Giacco!  
*Giacco.* There came a man—  
*One.* Ay, 'tis so.  
*Another.* Very true—  
 So I say.

*Another.* Hear him !

*Another.* Ay, ay, go on, Giacco !

*Giacco.* There came a man dress'd like a priest—

*One.* The same.

*Another.* Yes, 'twas a priest.

*Another.* Said I not well ? ah, ah !

Trust Giacco for a tale.

*Giacco.* A thin pale man—

*One.* A pale thin man.

*Another.* Yes, pale and spare, I say so.

*Another.* Spare, very spare.

*Another.* The same ! the dogs snarl'd  
at him

As he were bones.

*Giacco.* He pass'd down Duomo Street—

*One.* The very street !

*Another.* Yes, yes, the place, the place,

The very place—all but the name—good Giacco !

*Another.* Giacco forgets a little—Yes, yes, Giacco—

(*Aside*). My life on it, he means the place I say !

*Giacco.* Walking down slowly—

*One.* Yes, yes, walking slowly.

*Another.* Right, Giacco !

*Another.* Well done, Giacco !

*Another.* Ay, I say so ;

Oh, 'tis my story !

*Giacco.* Walking down he enters

A merchant's office hard upon the quay—

*One.* Wrong, Giacco !

*Another.* Giacco, thou'rt beside thyself !

*Another.* Blind Giacco !

*Another.* Saints and angels !

*Giacco.* Why I saw him—

*Another.* Giacco, thou liest !

*Another.* Turn him out !

*Another.* Nay ! 'tis flagrant !

*All.* Turn him out !

*Enter a Village-Schoolmaster.*

*Doctor Scio.* Men !

*Some.* Room for the Doctor Scio !\*

*Others.* Chair for the master, there !

*Others.* Hats off ! the Doctor !

*All.* Room for the Doctor ! Let the Doctor judge !

Take him aside, Giovanni. Tell him all !

Tell him, Giovanni !

*Scio (pompously).* Children agapete !

Well-beloved children ! trouble not Giovanni !

For as of old the mild mellifluous beams

Of Cytherea on the Prince of Troy

Stole through the broken pane,—as to Endymion,

Through the crack'd casement of consenting cave,

The star-train'd goddess came ; so from these wide

And vomitorial windows, belch'd your tumult

To me transgressing.

*Some.* Hear him !

*Others.* Well done, Scio !

Hear him !

*One.* Oh learning ! what a treasure thou art !

*Others.* Hurrah ! Speak, Doctor, speak !

\* The reader need not be reminded that *Scio* is but one syllable in Italian.

*Scio.* The labourer  
Is worthy of his hire. Friends, what is hire?  
*All.* Wages!

*Scio.* And when, Sirs, does the fatigate  
Pellosseous, son of sudorific toil,  
Receive his wage? Is it not, friends, the eve,  
The sweet stipendiary eve of Saturn's day?  
*Burghers (to each other).* Didst hear the like? What 'tis  
to be a scholar!

*Scio* has my boy—for one.

*Scio.* And shall we, friends,  
Shall we degrade the majesty of Learning  
Which I—which I—her infinitesimal  
Exiguous representative—

*Some.* Bravo,  
Well said!

*Scio.* Which I—her representative  
Exiguous but unworthy—

*Some.* No, no, *Scio*,  
No, not unworthy.

*Others.* Don't be modest, *Scio*;  
Unworthy! bah!—

*Others.* Give us the other words—  
Go on, *Scio*, "infinite"—

*Scio.* I say, my friends,  
Shall I, the representative of Learning,  
Work first and be paid after, like the plodder  
In yonder field? My friends, there was a thing,  
A tool, an article, friends, a utensil  
Known to our fathers by the sacred names

Poculum, cantharus, carchesium, scyphus,  
 Cymbium, culullus, cyathus, amystis,  
 Scaphium, batiola, and now by us  
 Their children, Sirs, albeit unworthy, call'd  
*A cup.*

*All.* A cup, a cup, a cup of wine !  
 Well done, old Scio ! hurrah ! a cup of wine  
 Here for the doctor, oh ! a cup of wine.

*Enter a Stranger, who stands aside. A Burgher bows to him, and speaks.*

*Burgher (to Stranger).* A stranger ?

*Stranger.*

Yes.

*Burgher.*

You come in a good time, Sir ;

Sir, you're a happy man, I give you joy, Sir ;

Sir, these are times !—I take it, Sir, few men

Can gainsay that, Sir,—these are times, Sir, eh ?

*Stranger.* Sir, these are times.

*Burgher (pointing to Scio).* You take me, Sir, I see.

Now, Sir, behold that man. I say, Sir, mark him ;

Now, Sir, you see a man, a man, Sir.

*Stranger.*

Sir,

I see a man.

*Burgher.* Just my idea, Sir,—Sir,

I crave your further knowledge, we are friends—

Saints ! how a patriot's eye—between ourselves—Sir,

A patriot's eye finds out the man of the age.

*Stranger.* There is a nameless something—

*Burgher.*

Sir, you have it ;

My own idea, Sir, from a boy—a something

Indisputably something. Yes, a something

As one might say—to speak more plainly—something,

A something, Sir,—something in the set of the ear—

*Many shout.* Scio—Doctor Scio—Silence ! The Doctor !  
Silence !

*Enter LELIO, a Student.*

*Lelio.* Here's news, friends !

*Many.* How now, Lelio ?

*Lelio.* Which man here

Tells the best tale ?

*Many.* I. I. I. I. I. I.

*Lelio.* Nay, everybody ! Write me up a nonsuch !

I can beat everybody. Heroes can

No more.

*All.* A challenge, lads ; what ho ! a ring,

A ring, a ring, a ring ! Champion, step out !

A ring ! a ring !

*A Student.* Go call thy daughter, hostess,

Here's that will make her honest.

*Hostess.* Sir ?

*Student.* A ring.

*All.* Now, Lelio, now, each man that beats thee wins

His bottle.

*Lelio.* Done. You know the fair Francesca,

Count Grassi's daughter ?

*All.* Are we Milanese ?

*Lelio.* Well—

*One.* Well ?

*Another.* Well ! Nay, if she's well, Lelio,

'Tis no such story !

*Lelio.* Which man has not seen

Young Roderigo Rossi ?

*All.* Or the sun,  
The moon—a star or two—the Duomo—well ?  
*Lelio.* Young Rossi and a priest fell out last night.  
*Several.* A priest—a priest—a priest—  
*One.* My life upon it  
The fellow knows my story.  
*Lelio.* On this quarrel,  
Our gallant Cavaliero dooms his man  
To die at day-break.  
*Many.* By the holy pope,  
A foul deed—nay, a foul deed.  
*One (aside).* Ne'ertheless,  
By Heavens I'm glad on't. This is not my story.  
My priest was a true patriot.  
*Lelio.* At midnight—  
(Count Grassi's child hath a fair face)  
*Several.* At midnight,  
Count Grassi's child hath a fair face ! Fie, Lelio ;  
Why what a traitor art thou !  
*Lelio.* Attend, I say !  
Bold Rossi's lewdness is a proverb—  
*Several (pour badiner).* Hold,  
Lelio, for pity—there are bachelors here—  
We are not all companions in misfortune !  
For pity, Lelio !  
*Lelio.* You that shout for pity,  
If you be Pity's followers, do her now  
Your best allegiance. Good friends, I, her quæstor,  
Claim tribute from you. A few tears will pay it.  
Listen. The young Francesca, at the price  
Of her fair body, bought the captive's life ;

The priest is free. Do not cry out. Young Rossi  
 Craved instant payment. She in her superb  
 High loveliness, whose every look enhanced  
 The ransom, sent him from her, glad to grant  
 Another maiden hour for prayer and tears.  
 Francesca wore a poniard. She is now  
 A maid for ever.

*Hostess (to one standing by).* How is that, Sir?

*Student (aside).*

Hush!

Dead!

*Several.* 'Tis a woful story. Poor Francesca!

*Scio.* Requiem æternam dona eis Domine!

*Several.* Amen. Amen.

*Hostess (aside).* Dead! 'tis against my conscience;

Dead! and the Signor Rossi! why a comelier

Walks not Milan. Dead—nay, I couldn't have done it!

Well, well, there be hard hearts that slight their blessings.

So comely a young man! The saints preserve me!

Nay, 'twas a sinful blindness.

*Lelio.*

How now, hostess,

Some wine, some wine; wine, wine.

*Several.*

More wine; now, Lelio,

Who was this monk?—

*Lelio.*

Fill up your glasses, comrades,

Sorrow is thirsty fellowship—eh, hostess?

*Several.* Lelio—now, Lelio—name, name, name!

*Others.*

This priest,

This lady-killing priest!

*Lelio (to one).*

Hast thou forgotten

A dance with Ginevrà at eve? A priest—



*One.* The same?

*Lelio.* The same.

*One.* Vittorio Santo? speak!

*Another.* Santo?

*Another.* Vittorio Santo?

*Lelio.* What! Vincenzo

Barnabà! Ah Tomaseo! are ye also

Of Nazareth? Well done! tell you my story.

*Many.* Lelio—hear Lelio—

*Others.* Hear!

*Lelio.* It was this Santo.

Dost thou mind, Giacchimo, how, deftly feigning

Sorrows about a grave, he won our ears

And prick'd us on to virtue with the sword

Of our own sympathies? With such shrewd warfare—

Proteus for transformation—Briareus

For head and hands—this strange campaigner carries

The fire and sword of his hot argument

From cot to palace, plain to mountain-top.

The merchant at his ledger, lifting eyes

Bloodshot with lack of sleep—for last night blew—

Sees him beside his desk at close of day,

And thinks the lamp burns dimmer, and believes

The untold loss already. The pale priest,

Opening his silent lips with such an omen

That the faint listener starts, relates how some

Great galleon, gallant on her homeward way—

A floating Ind, mann'd by the pride of Europe—

Storm'd by a scallop fleet of naked pirates,

Bestrews their savage shores, and makes each rock

Arabia. With keen eyes catching the throes  
Of his now gasping auditor, the tale  
Our stern tormentor fashions so astutely,  
That each new fear, enduing, strains it to  
Its several shape. Watching each rising hope,  
He stings it mad with some especial horror,  
And by a track of anguish feels his way  
Straight to his victim's heart. In that worst moment  
The messenger of doom assumes the angel!  
Looks that evangelise, eyes that beam light  
Into the soul, 'till every dead hope glitters  
Like a crown'd corpse; a moment's shining silence,  
Slow placid words that hurry to a torrent;  
Then the gulf-stream of passion! high command,  
Entreaty, reason, adjuration;—all  
The martial attitudes of a grand soul.  
The lavish wealth of infinite resource!  
Diamonds thrown broad-cast for denaros!—ay,  
That Argosy he spoke of, scatter'd on  
The maddest waves of rushing rapid, surging  
Headlong through foaming straits, above, below,  
Tossing the wealth of kingdoms, hurtles not  
With such tumultuous riches as the flood  
Of his strange eloquence. And then the scared  
And half-drown'd trader—lifting his blind thought  
Above the waters, that with sudden ebb  
Left him in silence—finds he is alone.  
Of all the golden wreck, his struggling soul  
Holds fast but this—*Rome* is that glorious galleon,  
Now stranded and forlorn: her freight of honours

Strew'd up and down the world, purpling strange snows  
And loading cold barbaric winds with incense.  
That night, at home, the merchant tells his story,  
Wherewith, still later, madam at her glass  
Stirs sleepy Abigail. Sweet Abigail,  
Still nearer midnight, garrulously coy,  
'Twixt amorous Corydon and her warm charms,  
Weaves the gauze meshes of the thrice-told tale.  
Next morn on 'Change betimes the story stalks  
By blind deaf faces, as a spirit might walk  
Among the wooden gods of the sea-kings.  
The hour of contract over,—the fierce edge  
Of morning appetite now turn'd with gold—  
Nature appeased, and the commercial soul  
In jolly after-dinner complaisance  
Relax'd and smiling,—prosperous ears attend  
The merchant never weary of recounting.  
“ Insured, Sir ? ” “ I fear not. ” “ Heyday, heyday,  
A sorry venture ! ” Then the angry hum  
Subsiding, all surround the man of facts.  
Sage heads shook much that day. Municipal  
Grave brains plagued with strange phantoms, never yet  
Free of the city, in the sacred gloom  
Of shades official, ached, and retched, and heaved,  
To throw the incivic innovation off :  
And in the pangs of labour crying out,  
Betrayed the parentage. . So this strange priest  
Made his foes preach for him, till all Leghorn  
Hung on his lips. With bold incessant presence  
Whereto no shrine is sacred, no stern fastness

Strong, no offended majesty majestic,  
No sinner excommunicate, no saint—  
Holy, no Dives rich, no Lazarus poor,  
No human heart unworthy—this strange man—  
This cowl'd evangelist, that *Monk* is not—  
(For he preach'd yesterday that not a bare  
Untempl'd spot, unblest, unconsecrate  
On earth, but is sufficient sanctuary  
For the best hour of the best life ;—no cloud  
In any heaven so dark that a good prayer  
Cannot ascend,)—this polyglot of prophets,  
Roams like a manifold infection, shedding  
Through the sick souls of men the strange disease  
Of his own spirit. Not an art or calling  
Wherein men work'd in peace, but at his touch  
Spreads the indefinite sorrow. In the field  
Halting the team of early husbandman,  
He chides him for the German weeds that choke  
The Roman crop of glory ; bids him seek  
The plough of Cincinnatus, and bring forth  
Into the sunshine of the age, that soil,  
That old heroic soil whence patriots spring !  
Hard by the wondering swain, sequester'd close  
By summer elms and vines, the village forge  
From cheerful anvil all the long day rings  
The chimes of labour. Thence at winter night  
Shines to the distant villager the star  
Of home ; to which the homeless wayfarer,  
Trudging with fainting steps the storm-vex'd moor,  
Turns hopeless eyes, as to the vestal fire

Of sweet impossible peace. Thereby the priest  
 Pausing, the sturdy smith suspends his stroke  
 Before the reverend stranger ; who accepts  
 The homage with such liquidating grace  
 That the stunn'd peasant, unabsolved of duty,  
 Renews obeisance. Then the pale intruder  
 Striding some stool, with hand upon the bellows,  
 Moves the slack fire, and bids the work go on :  
 Cursing the slave who stoops for prince or priest  
 The dignity of toil. To the rough music  
 Setting strong words, he sends with easy skill  
 Wrongs, hopes, and duties trooping through the soul  
 Of the stout smith, and there on his own smithy  
 Blows the rough iron of his heart red-hot.  
 Seizing the magic time, with sudden hand  
 He stamps him to the quick ;—"Patriot ! the hour  
 Is come to beat our ploughshares into swords,  
 Our pruning-hooks to spears !" The brand driven home,  
 The apostle vanishes, lest weaker words  
 Efface the sign.

*A Student.* Lelio ! dost thou remember—

*Lelio.* I know thy thought,—the shopman of the  
 vale—

*Student.* Nay, Lelio—

*Lelio.* Now I have it—the stout Tuscan,  
 With wain o'erloaded—

*Student.* Not he—

*Lelio.* Ah ! the maid  
 Who sang in German—

*Student.* No—

*Lelio.* Stay! she who wore  
The cameo victory—  
*Student.* Now hear me, *Lelio.*  
When he saw—  
*Lelio.* What! when meeting country boys  
With laurel and acanthus—  
*Student.* No! the saints!  
*Lelio.* True, true, the tale of the parch'd field beside  
The aqueduct—  
*Student.* Wrong! Holy Mary!  
*Lelio.* Well—  
*Student.* Peace, I say, *Lelio!*  
*Lelio.* Sometime hence, dear friend;  
I am not weary. 'Twas of the round tower  
Of Vesta, whence the epicurean Time,  
Fresh from the feasts of Rome, took but the heart,  
And all is there but the celestial flame  
That consecrated all—  
*Student.* Have thine own way,  
But were I *Lelio*—  
*Lelio.* Tut, I know thy story.  
'Twas of the eve when, meeting by the way  
An ancient pedagogue, whose thin, time-worn,  
And reverend features (whereabout grey locks  
Hung lank as weeds), great names went in and out,  
Mournfully populous, like olden heroes  
Haunting some Roman ruin; our fierce patriot—  
Say I not well?  
*Student.* Hast thou in truth forgotten  
The village priest?

*Lelio.*                   The priest? *our* priest says little  
To alb and stole—whether from shrewd self-knowledge,  
Or feeling that all tyrants are familiars,  
And that those proud prætorians who subverted  
The commonwealth of God would lord it over  
An earthly heritage—therefore, good comrade,  
Owe us thy tale.

*Student.*               One day—

*Lelio.*                   One moment first,  
("One day" can spare it). I shall ne'er forget,  
When falling in upon a lone wild road  
With a fat monk, our patriot, for sheer lack  
Of occupation, challenges a war  
Of words. Good saints! a firework by a fountain!  
A schoolboy's freak played out with cannon balls  
And rotten apples! As our Santo's lightnings  
Through the thick haze of t'other's sanctity  
Singed brow and beard, heavens! how the reverend eyes  
(Wrestling with wrinkles and siesta-time)  
Did struggle to a stare. And the good man,  
Heaving his flesh, buzzed like a portly fly  
In thundery weather; our relentless Santo  
At parting gives him for to-morrow's text  
The whip of knotted cords that cleansed the temple.  
"Preach, priest," he cries, "that from these sacred bounds,  
This outraged temple ITALY, each Roman  
Scourge those that sell the sacrilegious doves  
Of perjured peace. O'erturn, o'erturn," he cries,  
"The tables of those German money-changers,  
That make this house of prayer a den of thieves."

Assaulting thus with rude declaim those ears  
 Dull with the gentle lowings of fat kine  
 And soft excitements of refectory-bell,  
 Our Santo leaves him, ere the saint disturb'd,  
 In doubt of man or demon, could revolve  
 Upon his axis.

*All.* Ah, ah! Well done, Lelio!

*Lelio.* Our friar on this—

*One.* Why the saints smite thee, Lelio!

Now, Lelio!—Eh? nay, Sirs, as I'm alive

This was my story!

*Another.* Give thee joy of it,  
 Old Giacco, 'twas a sorry tale, now mine—

*Lelio.* Friends! we grow solemn. Wine, I say. A song,  
 A song.

*One.* Ay, something loyal—

*Lelio.* Worthy friends,  
 We should do well to purify the air  
 Whereof these tales were made; forced by our lips  
 Into unwilling treason.

*One.* Lelio!

*Another.* Shame!

*Lelio.* Therefore, my merry boys, I vote a ditty,  
 A well-affected ditty—nay, some say  
 'Twas writ by Metternich and Del Caretto,  
 At Schoenbrunn after dinner. Nay, no groans!  
 Sweet friends, no groans! Nay, hear me, friends.

*Shouts from many.* Down with him!

*Lelio.* No Carbonaro—

*Many.* Down with him!



*Lelio.* I call it  
 The triple crown, or the three jolly kings,  
 The Devil—  
*Some.* Hear!  
*Some.* Hurrah!  
*Lelio.* The Devil—  
*All.* Hurrah!  
*Lelio.* The Pope and the Kaiser.  
*All.* Hurrah! Lelio! Lelio!  
 True to the backbone still! Up with him, boys!  
 Chair him! a hall! a hall! now, Lelio, now!  
 Shout cheerly, man—here's thunder for a chorus!

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 SCENE VI.

*A Plain. A Cottage.*

*The Monk (VITTORIO SANTO). Two Children (a Boy and Girl). Their Father and Mother (both young) sit at the cottage door. The Monk draws near.*

*The Monk (aside).* This is the spot. From hence my eye  
 unseen  
 Commands their cottage. Hither have I fared  
 Five times at this same hour, and five times learn'd  
 To love my nature better. Here I stood,  
 And felt, when passing gales in snatches bore me  
 Their evening talk, as if some wayward child

Had pelted me with flowers. She is a poet,  
 Or in or out of metre. Rome must have her.  
 A mother too, 'tis well ; then there is one thing  
 The poet will serve. Ah ! art thou forth to-day,  
 Thou little tyrant, that shalt rule for me ?  
 My faith ! a lovely boy ! holy St. Mary !  
 Hark how he carols out his royalty,  
 And, born a sovereign, rules and knows it not.  
 The father must be mine too ; he hath bone  
 And sinew, and—if the eye's gauge deceive not—  
 A soul as brawny. Heavy deeds demand  
 Such carriers. I will win or lose this night.  
 Let me draw near.

*[The Children are sporting. The Girl hides among  
 myrtles, and sings.]*

*Girl.* Whither wingest thou, wingest thou, winny wind ;  
 Where, winny wind, where, oh where ?

*Boy (singing).* My sister, my sister, I flit forth to find ;  
 My sister, my sister, the orange-flow'r fair !

*Girl.* Since thy songs thy soft sister seek,  
 What wouldst with her ? say, oh say.

*Boy.* Oh, to pat her pearl-white cheek,  
 And court her with kisses all day !

*[The Child bursts from her hiding place, and the Children  
 chase each other over the plain.]*

*The Mother.* Husband ! the music in my soul would chord  
 Most sweetly with thy voice. Take down thy lute.

*The Father.* Nay, Lila ; bid me not do violence  
 To this calm sunset. List that golden laughter,  
 Hark to our children ! There is music like

The hour. From each to each the heart can pass,  
And know no change.

*The Mother.* Sing me a song about them,  
Kind husband. Sing that song I made for thee,  
When once, on a sweet eve like this, we watch'd  
As now our joyous babes—I blessing them,  
Thou marvelling, with show of merry jest,  
How they could be so fair.

*The Father.* Even as thou wilt,  
Dear Lila. If the spirit of these moments  
Deem my voice sacrilege, let him forgive  
The singer for the poet.

[*He sings.*

Oh, Lila ! round our early love,  
What voices went—in days of old !  
Some sleep, and some are heard above,  
And some are here—but changed and cold !

What lights they were that lit the eyes  
That never may again be bright !  
Some shine where stars are dim ; and some  
Have gone like meteors down the night.

I marvell'd not to see them beam,  
Or hear their music round our way ;  
A part of life *they* used to seem,  
But *these*—oh whence are they ?

Ear hath not heard the tones they bring,  
Lip hath not named their name,  
Like primroses around the spring,  
Each after each they came.

I should not wonder, love, to see  
In dreams of elder day,  
The forms of things that used to be,  
But *these*—oh whence are they?

Dost thou remember when the days  
Were all too short for love and me,  
And we roam'd forth at eve in rays  
Of mingled light from heaven and thee?

One gentle sign so often beam'd  
Upon us with such favouring eyes,  
That every vow we plighted seem'd  
A secret holden with the skies.

Now sometimes, in strange phantasy,  
I think, if stars could leave their sphere,  
And won by the dear love of thee,  
Renew the constellation here,

And shine here with the tender light  
That glinted through the olden trees,  
They would come silently and bright,  
And one by one, like these.

How can a joy so pure and free  
Have sprung from tears and cares?  
I have no beauty—and for thee,  
Thou hast no mirth like theirs.

Yet with strange right each takes his rest  
 Even when he will, on thy fair breast,  
 Nor doubts nor fears nor prays.  
 The daisy smiling on the lea  
 Comes not with kindlier trust to be  
 Beloved of April days.

I look into their laughing eyes,  
 They cannot have more light than thine—  
 But treasured by ten thousand ties,  
 Mine own I know *thee*, Lila mine.

Wistful I gaze on *them* and say,—  
 Fond, checking with a doubtful sigh  
 The pride that swells, I know not why—  
 These, these, oh whence are they?

[*The Monk draws near.*

*The Father.* Lila ! the same pale priest we saw last eve !

*The Mother.* Good husband, bid him here. The dust of  
 travel

Tells that his way was weary. Holy Sir,  
 Will 't please you sit with us ? The herds are milk'd.  
 Our bread is brown, but honest.

*The Monk.* Do not ask me.

Are you not happy ?

*The Wife.* *Happy !* reverend father ?

We thank God, and say yes. This day five years  
 One whom I saw for the first time, through tears,  
 Came with the flowers. When they began to fade  
 How my heart sicken'd ! But God call'd him not

With them. And though the snows of winter came  
He stayed, and held enough of summer with him  
To fill my house. Should I not be most happy?  
Look on my boy, my merry one! Good father,  
Which of the angels do they miss in heaven?  
Ofttimes at mass I press him close, and tremble  
To the sweet voices, lest at "in excelsis"  
He should remember, and go back.

*The Monk.* Oh mother,  
That art, and art not, kind! 'Tis a brave boy.

*The Mother.* And then he is so gentle and so fond,  
And prattles to me sometimes in strange wisdom,  
And asks of me in such sweet ignorance,  
That teaching him I weep; oft, oft, for joy,  
But oft for very grief, that each task leaves  
One tiny question less.

*The Monk.* 'Tis a sweet child.

*The Father.* Sir Priest, thou knowest well how poor an image  
A mother's love will idolize; but this  
Dear boy hath put a woman's heart in me,  
He is so good, so dutiful—

*The Mother.* And yet  
When he kneels by me at his innocent prayer,  
Oft I look down and feel that I have need  
To learn of him.

*The Monk.* Let me bless him.

*The Father.* My son,  
The priest would bless thee on thy birth-day; boy,  
Come bend thee at his knee.

*The Monk.* Thou little child,

Thy mother's joy, thy father's hope—thou bright,  
 Pure dwelling where two fond hearts keep their gladness—  
 Thou little potentate of love, who comest  
 With solemn sweet dominion to the old,  
 Who see thee in thy merry fancies charged  
 With the grave embassage of that dear past,  
 When they were young like thee—thou vindication  
 Of God—thou living witness against all men  
 Who have been babes—thou everlasting promise  
 Which no man keeps—thou portrait of our nature,  
 Which in despair and pride we scorn and worship—  
 Thou household-god, whom no iconoclast  
 Hath broken,—if I knew a parent's joys,  
 If I were proud and full of great ambitions,  
 Had haughty limbs that chafed at ill-borne chains,  
 If I had known a tyrant's scorn and felt  
 That vengeance though bequeathed is still revenge,  
 I would pray God to give me such a son !  
 Therefore, thou little one, mayst thou sleep well  
 This night : and, for thy waking, may it be  
 Where there are neither kings nor slaves. Of all  
 Thy playmates, mayst thou be the first to die—

*The Mother shrieks.* Ah ! holy father !

*The Monk.*

Smitten in the bud

Mayst thou fade on the stalk that had no thorns  
 To save thee from the spoiler—mayst thou—

*The Mother.*

Mercy !

*The Father.* Fiend ! murderer !

*The Monk.* Did you not bid me bless him ?

*The Mother.* My boy ! my happy one ! my bright-eyed babe !

*The Father.* Thou hooded demon ! thou hell-priest !

*The Monk.* Be patient.

I will take off the blessing ; but hear me,  
And you shall bid me pray for it again.

*The Mother.* Blessing ? 'Tis blessing to behold him smile  
With his bright, innocent, unconscious eyes,  
Which thou wouldst close for ever !

*The Monk.* Is that blessing ?

Too happy mother ! how thou lov'st to weep !  
Come hither, child. Nay, daughter, tremble not !  
He is a Roman, and can fear no man—  
A child, and dreads not death.

'Tis the purblind  
Dim sense of after years that makes our monsters.  
The earth hath none to children and to angels.  
Eyes weak with vigil, sear'd with scalding tears,  
Betray us, and we start at death and phantoms  
Because they are pale. And the still-groping heart  
Incredulous by over much believing—  
Walking by sight dreads the unknown, and clings  
Even to familiar sorrow, and loves more  
The seen earth than the unseen God.

Ay, bright one,  
Climb near the lips that speak of death. The word  
Falls on the sunshine of thy face and casts  
No shadow. Thou dost play among the flowers  
Morning and even, and the selfsame wind  
Fosters and scatters them. Why shouldst thou fear ?  
Twine thy young arms, thou little budding vine,  
Round the old barren oak ; 'tis sweet to love thee,



Too sweet. I look upon thy brow of promise,  
And see it in the future like some cloud  
Uprising from the distant hills, that seemeth  
To bear up heaven. This may do more. Contain it.  
Contain it and the things which heaven and earth  
Cannot contain. In thine unsullied eyes,  
Not made for tears ; in thy bright looks, sweet boy,  
Wherein the blush yet sleeps which sights of shame  
Shall call there, till the weary veins refuse  
Their office, and endurance sends the blood  
Back from the blanch'd cheeks to the terrible heart  
To heave and madden there—(let tyrants tremble  
Who rule pale slaves)—yes, in thy brave proud mien,  
Thou baby hero, that art born in vain,  
I see why Roman mothers wept for glory  
And we for shame. I see the ancient beauty  
Sport on the plain where Brutus watch'd his children,  
And give them no supremacy. I see  
Iulus' self. Cornelia would have own'd  
These jewels. Regulus saw nothing fairer  
When from the sands of Carthage his great thought  
Walk'd by the streams of his Italian hills,  
And by the well-known grove beheld his children  
Play round the homeside myrtles, where their mother  
Sat and look'd eastward ! Wherein art thou less  
Than Roman ? Oh thou hapless flower, that canst not  
Fruit in this frozen land, how shall I bless thee ?  
Art thou not noble, gentle, beautiful ?  
Hast thou one aspiration to climb aught  
Beside thy mother's knee ? Do they not love thee,

Believe thee, trust thee, hope in thee, adore thee ?  
 Dost thou not take their cares from morn till eve,  
 And in the radiant alchemy of thine eyes  
 Transmute them into joys ? Runs not their fate  
 In that inherited blood that warms thy cheek ?  
 Were they not things like *thee*, and are they not  
*Themselves* ? and do they murmur ? What though, fair one,  
 Angels might envy—if they were not angels—  
 The stature that the fresh bright air of freedom  
 Should fan thee to ? It passes the court fashion,  
 Breaks footstep in the Austrian ranks, and fits  
 No cell in Spielberg. It might even betide  
 That Roman arms work'd ill in chains ; a voice  
 Like that which cheer'd the legions, might be guilty  
 Of old ancestral words which would sound strange  
 In German ears. Nay, there was once a Roman—  
 I saw him, and felt nobler ! he was like thee !  
 Like thee as star to star ! If you be parents,  
 Fall down and pray that he may die !

*The Mother.* Good padre,  
 Pity us.

*The Father.* Priest !

*The Mother.* Be silent, he is moved,  
 Perchance *he* was a father.

[*A long pause, the Monk covers his head with his mantle.*

*The Monk (looking up).* Evening comes  
 Apace. The tired ox slackens in the furrow.  
 The shade that on your threshold paused but now,  
 Hath climb'd the vine where from the eaves the swallow  
 Sings early vespers. My full heart prescient

Heaves to the falling hour. Children, kneel down,  
 Let holy words spread evening in your souls,  
 Lest they be timeless when the far bell rings

Ave Maria. [They kneel. The Monk reads.

The Monk. And I heard a voice,  
 A voice from heaven, which said unto me, "Write,  
 Blessed are the dead." [He pauses.

Rise up! I had forgotten!

Forgive me!

The Mother. Reverend father!

The Father. Friend, what say'st thou?

The Monk. That if thou wert what that proud man should be  
 Who calls this child "my son," this land "my country,"  
 Thou hadst cried out "Amen!"

The Father. Sir Priest, so please you

To speak in riddles—read them.

The Monk. I will read them.

And mine enigma shall be such grim pastime  
 As fiends might play at.

Pity me, this anger

Wrongs you. I do forget that you are yet  
 But a few moments off from happiness,  
 And that the music of her shores is singing  
 Still in your ears. We dwellers in the dark  
 Forget the weakness of your daylight eyes.  
 I should remember that the twilight stands  
 'Twixt night and day. My fierce and tropical fancy,  
 Hot with swift pulses, saw the sun go down,  
 And look'd up for the stars. I had a brother—  
 I had? Oh heaven! there is no Lazarus

So poor as Dives fallen ! You whose portion  
In the abounding present is unspent—  
You with whose friendships and familiar joys  
Earth is still populous—you who have not  
Learn'd yet, when stranger lips descant of love,  
Unconsciously to look upon the turf—  
You who are only of this upper world,  
You know not what it costs to say "*I had.*"  
But there shall come a time when ye shall sit  
Safe in this cabin, yet shall feel the rain  
Falling upon you, though your limbs be dry,  
And your hearth warm. And then you shall forgive me,  
And feel that I have something to forgive !  
Then you shall know how sickly and distract  
Thoughts grow, that pass their days beneath the sod,  
And sit whole nights by graves.

I had a brother,  
We were twin shoots from one dead stem. He grew  
Nearer the sun, and ripen'd into beauty ;  
And I within the shadow of my thoughts,  
Pined at his side and loved him. He was brave,  
Gallant and free. I was the silent slave  
Of fancies ; neither laugh'd, nor fought, nor play'd,  
And loved not morn nor eve for very trembling  
At their long wandering shades. In childhood's sports  
He won for me, and I look'd on aloof ;  
And when perchance I heard him call'd my brother,  
Was proud and happy. So we grew together,  
Within our dwelling by the desert plain,  
Where the roe leap'd,

And from his icy hills the frequent wolf  
Gave chivalry to slaughter. Here and there  
Rude heaps, that had been cities, clad the ground  
With history. And far and near, where grass  
Was greenest and the unconscious goat browsed free,  
The teeming soil was sown with desolations,  
As though Time—striding o'er the field he reap'd—  
Warm'd with the spoil, rich droppings for the gleaners  
Threw round his harvest way. Frieze, pedestal,  
Pillars that bore through years the weight of glory,  
And take their rest. Tombs, arches, monuments,  
Vainly set up to save a name, as though  
The eternal served the perishable ; urns,  
Which winds had emptied of their dust, but left  
Ful of their immortality. In shrouds  
Of reverent leaves, rich works of wondrous beauty  
Lay sleeping—like the children in the wood—  
Fairer than they. Columns like fallen giants,  
The victor on the vanquish'd, stretch'd so stern  
In death, that not a flower might dare to do  
Their obsequies. And some from sweet Ionia,  
With those Ionia bore to Roman skies  
Lay mingled, like a goddess and her mother,  
Who wear, with difference, the co-equal brightness  
Of fadeless youth. The plain thus strew'd with ages  
Flower'd in the sunshine of to-day, and bore me  
The Present and the Past. But there were some  
Proud changeless stones that stood up in the sun,  
And with their shadowy finger on the plain  
Drew the same mystic circle day by day,

And these I worshipp'd. Honouring them, because  
 It needs must be they knew the sense that sign  
 Bore in the language of Eternity ;  
 And fearing them for that dark hand which ever—  
 When I drew near their awful face at noon,  
 And, spent with wondering, sank down unconscious,  
 And slept upon the turf—came back at even  
 And cast me shuddering out.

So days wore on,  
 And childhood. And the shade of all these ruins  
 Fell on my soul. And *he*, my pride, grew up,  
 With, and without me. And we were such brothers  
 As day and night. We met at morn and eve.  
 Each sun uprose to find us hand in hand,  
 And see a tender parting. Each first star  
 Led back the shades and us. He flush'd with conquest,  
 Rich in the well slain antelope, and all  
 That feathery wage youth loves to take for labour ;  
 I laden with new thoughts. Pale, travel-worn,  
 Spent with fierce exercise and faint with toil,  
 I, who—the shepherd of the plain would tell you—  
 Since sunbreak upon one same broken column  
 Sat like a Caryatid. So youth was mine,  
 And seasons crown'd it manhood.

Manhood came,  
 And with it those fierce instincts of strange combat,  
 That hurtle in the heart when the new powers,  
 Like eager vassals on Ascension-day,  
 Crowd round the throned will. Childhood and youth  
 May own unwritten law, and kiss the rod

That strikes, but parleys not. But man must be  
A subject, not a slave. And manhood stood  
Before the shadows that had awed the child,  
And bade them answer. And they spoke. My heart  
Stood up. A thousand senses ran to arms,  
To guard the revelation ; but it came not.  
Like a mask'd guest, the voice went through my soul,  
And wandering there long days and nights, made all  
My hours alarums. So the phantom knight,  
In awful legend of the old Romaunt,  
By a proud castle winds his ghostly horn,  
And blows his challenge in at every gate,  
And through the chafed halls stalks the unearthly sound,  
And fills with strange ubiquitous defiance  
Turret and dungeon, battlement and keep,  
Which groan back answering War. While at the blast  
Grim sudden furies fill the martial place,  
Helm rings with hauberk, scutcheon'd gonfalons  
Wave in no wind. Shields rattle. Chargers neigh  
To unblown clarions. Weapons clash unbid  
On the vex'd walls, and men, with swords half-drawn,  
Start up and stare into the troublous air.  
Not otherwise the voice disturb'd my soul,  
Till spectral nights and strange unnatural days  
Beckon'd their neighbour, Death. I felt him chill  
The sunshine round me. But I only look'd  
More fondly for my brother.

When day went,  
And we met by the well-known spot at even,  
And by the kindred moon, he saw the pale

Faint life that lean'd upon his stalwart beauty,  
I was a dearer burden than the spoils  
Of his best hunting field. With tender pain  
He led me forth at sunrise, and came back  
Before the dews. And, with moist eyes, I mark'd  
Daily he brought home less and less at even,  
With forethought of the day's sad robbery,  
Keeping in fond economy more strength  
To lend mine indigence. And thus I measur'd  
My life's receding tide. 'Twas beautiful  
To see, as each wave ebb'd from earth, the sands,  
Purple with flowers from heaven. He gave me cares,  
I paid him from the alms the hills, and vales,  
Plains, ruins, waters, fields, and skies had thrown me  
Through my long hours of waiting. I beheld him—  
And so you shall behold your child one day—  
Sublime as if a god of old had stepp'd  
Warm from his marble pedestal. I gave him  
Nectar for gods. I saw his eyes light up,  
And into his heroic hand I put  
The weapon of my thoughts. And he smote with it—  
Look to your boy, he will smite so—he smote  
And struck such flashes from a despot's helm  
As might set thrones on fire. And some who winced  
Complain'd. When the lamb bleats in the Abruzzi,  
The wolf is silent—'tis the tyrant's music ;  
But let one miscreant yelper howl, and mark  
How all the pack gives tongue. An outraged *people*  
Cries out for ages, and the sacred sound  
Broods o'er our land, and finds no wind to bear



The thankless burden hence. A *tyrant* yells,—  
Though but the very meanest starveling hound,  
The most distemper'd cur that feeds upon  
The garbage thrown from palaces—no matter—  
A thousand echoes tell it in Vienna,  
And fill the air with German. Oh my brother,  
Would I had been content to be thy debtor,  
Nor paid thee in a coin that bore the stamp  
Of freedom in a captive land! They seized him,  
They seized! Who seized? Some Roman lictor—one  
Beneath whose reverend hand it would be glory  
To think that heroes suffer'd so, and counted  
The touch no shame? Goths, whose barbarian sires  
Made holiday for ours. Vandals and Huns,  
The cubs of dams more savage than our mothers  
Deign'd to enslave; all that rank Northern growth,  
By whose rude hands the might of bones and thews  
Bearded our conscript fathers in the forum,  
And beards their children here,—who sit like them,  
Silent, but not like them sublime. Camillus!  
What! can we lounge upon our curule chairs,  
And play the Roman only in endurance?  
Earth! what hast thou of vigour less than Greece,  
That in that genial soil the serpent's teeth  
Sprang up arm'd men;—and here we have sown heroes  
And reap—grass! Yes. He fell. Behold your son  
Picture him nobler than the noblest vision  
Of thy day-dreams, poor mother! See, the bloodhounds  
Have track'd him to your cot. A faded face  
Lies with dark uprais'd eyes of love before

The fond heroic brother. Heavenly calm  
Warders the room, and of the sweet emotions  
Of the rejoicing world without, lets in  
Only the silent sunshine. The door bursts !  
A shriek ! a shout ! they seize him ! The pale form  
Springs at the first and falls. Now see your hero  
Like an inspired colossus striding o'er him.  
With either hand he hurls a savage hence,  
Footholds each bare neck, with twice another twain  
Acquaints the sounding walls. Falls by some blow  
From unseen hand. Sinks by the yelling weight  
Of crowds. A moment more, and like dead game  
Slung by some trooper's side, mother, he greets thee,  
And leaves thee baptized in his sprinkled gore,  
To faiths kings dream not of. Oh brother, brother,  
Oh memory ! that canst bring me back such woes  
And break not ! Thus they tore him from me. Ah,  
Poor tender child, why doth thy baby heart  
Look up through saddening eyes ? What ! little one,  
And canst thou read the future ? Dost thou know  
That he was like thee ? Ay, poor mother, clasp him,  
Clasp him while yet thou may'st ! Secure as thou  
That morn I clasp'd my brother ! Dost thou ask  
What tidings fell upon the failing ear  
Of him who in the cottage by the plain  
Lay weeping ? Be it as thou wilt, poor mother,  
It concerns thee ;—what if of all thy tears—  
Thy fated tears—a few are shed too soon ?  
For me I am a rock which, long years hence,  
The storms stripp'd rudely, and with my few flowers

Took all that nursed them, and to after tempests  
 Left but the cold bare stone. In earth or heaven  
 I have no more to fear. But for *thee*, mother,  
 I will read out this story, and perchance  
 Teach thee to strike the fire that yet may burn  
 The page ere it be thine.

*The Mother.*

Oh that thou wouldst !

*The Monk.* Not of the dungeons, those dark catacombs.  
 Where our oppressors heap'd their sins for ages,  
 Wrong after wrong, till the o'er-surfeited rock  
 At the great day of reckoning shall belch up  
 A thousand years to cry for vengeance. No,  
 Those Roman limbs were purchased far too dearly  
 To rot in Spielberg. He was tall of stature,  
 And fair to look upon. So shall your son  
 Be tall and fair. It pleased some small tyrant  
 To see such goodly slaves. The shameful trappings  
 Of a detested loyalty, the fillets  
 That deck the sacrifice, the fearful gewgaws  
 That ratify the compact, when the body  
 Serves what the soul abhors, and with the bribe  
 Tricks out the whoredom, these worse chains replaced  
 The felon's fetters, and the outraged Roman  
 Rose up an Austrian soldier ! The plot thickens—  
 The shadow of the end is on my soul—  
 Count tears for words—nay, you are parents—I  
 Was but a brother—wherefore should I speak ?  
 Poor mother ! in this Jordan I have need  
 To be baptized of you. My soul is wise  
 In grief. Yet a few years and you shall smile—

If you *can* smile—to think I taught ye. Tell me,  
 What would your gallant boy, if tyrants bade him  
 Shed Roman blood like rain? Look on your Roman!  
 Mine was no less!—*Was*—Oh my heart! He hurl'd—  
 His proud looks prouder than his words of pride,—  
 With desperate hand the execrated sword  
 Flagrant before the despot and defied him!  
 Rent from his breast the guilt dishonour, spurn'd it  
 Into Italian dust. Erect, defiant,  
 Before the host cried Freedom! and was doom'd,  
 Doom'd to a coward's death. They led him forth,  
 They led him forth a pace upon the Lea,  
 Scourged, buffeted, reviled, and only asking  
 To die unbound, with his unconquer'd face  
 Turn'd to the south and home. And they denied him.  
 By a rude trench where fresh-turn'd earth lay dark,  
 He stood a passing moment, and since then  
 I say "I had a brother."

If I weep

To see your child, forgive me, and remember  
 When I drew near his sport this eve, and you  
 Look'd on with smiles, and I with sighs, you marvell'd.  
 Why marvel, when we saw not the same scene?  
 Before you lay the happy evening world,  
 O'er-joyous in the promise of more joy,  
 And there he sported like a merry voice  
 Singing of morrows. Mine eyes sought the same  
 Point of the compass, but for me the shades  
 In my dark soul went forth to meet the night,  
 The night that look'd from grove and thicket, calling

By missionary winds and twilight birds  
 All earth to that meek face wherein she payeth  
 Her duties to the moon. He sported, too,  
 In my world, and 'twas sweet to look on him.  
 But to my eyes, in ambient atmospheres  
 Of tints and hues that brighten'd other days,  
 Floated round smiling—like a choir of angels  
 About a cherub—that old dreamy past,  
 In which he plays my brother. Near his feet  
 There was a long sad mound, and by the mound  
 Dark drops of blood. And when he prattled out  
 His childish joy, my heart heard distant muskets,  
 And to my ear the heavy earth fell dead  
 Into a coffinless grave.

[*The vesper bell sounds from the distant convent.*

Ave Maria !

*The Mother (throwing herself passionately to the ground).* Ave

Maria ! Happy evermore,

Oh Mater Unigeniti—save, save,

Oh save my child !

*The Father.* Ave Maria ! Queen

Of judgment that went forth to victory !

Remember desolation blights the hills

That slew the Crucified ! Mother avenged !

If my first-born must be like thine, grant vengeance

Like thine !

*The Mother.* If it must be—

*The Monk.*

Ave Maria ! say

It shall *not* be ! Thou who didst bear salvation !

Oh Virgin ! thou who in thy breast didst carry

The fate of worlds unfainting—give, give strength  
To these !

*The Father and Mother.* Oh Mother, pity us !—

*The Monk.*

Oh Mother,

Pity our country ! Mater benedicta !

Thou who three days didst watch a tomb in tears,

Pity our vigil of a thousand years,

And bid the dead arise !

*The Father and Mother.* Oh Queen of sighs,  
Look down on us from thy fair heaven with eyes  
Softer than evening !

*The Mother.* Mater casta, pia,  
Quondam afflicta—take him to thy skies !  
Even what thou wilt for me, but oh, for him  
Hast thou no place among thy seraphim ?  
Is he not thine ? Thou gavest him. Take, oh take  
The bright gift back, for a sad mother's sake,  
Oh Mother !

*The Monk.* Ah ?

*The Father.* Amen !

*The Monk.* Ave Maria ! [They rise.

*The Father.* Priest, hast thou no Amen ?

*The Monk.* Did I not tell you  
That you should crave my blessing, though it fell  
Black as a curse ?

*The Mother.* Alas !

*The Monk.* Says the priest ill  
Who prays the mother's prayer ?

*The Mother.* Be merciful !

*The Monk.* Nay, be *you* merciful. I look upon

This gentle boy, and every blushing feature  
Of his young beauty cries for mercy—

*The Mother.*

Priest,

If thou art false in all things as in this,  
God help thee. I have been a tender mother !

*The Monk.* Thou filiacide ! Why should he die ? This land,  
Hath it no place for him ? This Roman sunshine,  
Doth it fall strangely on his cheek ?

These flowers,

Twine they not kindly with his hair, and peep  
With fondness in his brighter face ?

*The Boy.*

Oh, mother,

Tell him they love me.

*The Mother.*

Hush ! my beautiful ;

What is there loves thee not ?

*The Monk.*

Why should he die,

Whom the whole world surrounds, and with chaste voices  
Woos to sweet life ? You craven hearts ! Who slew  
My brother, and shall slay your son ? These hills ?  
These woods that frown on you ? The sun and moon,  
That look down on their ancient shrines, and smile  
That you adore their God ? Tell me, what lot  
Is desperate which the heaven and earth condemn not ?  
Did this land, which bore gods, spend all its strength  
In the sublime conception, and birth-worn  
Bring pigmies forth in these last days ? What fate  
Made only *Romans* mortal ? Is it written  
That when the oppressor meets the oppress'd, and one  
Dies, it must be the *slave* ? You Romans !—stay,  
I have o'ershot myself. You will betray me.

You have look'd on this child for five long years,  
Five long fond loving years, and never wish'd  
To save him—why should I—

*The Mother.* Oh father, save him !

Bid me die—on my knees—

*The Father.* Peace. Priest, the cloud  
Is silent till it lightens ; dost thou take me ?

*The Monk.* Thou hast a fearless eye.

*The Father.* Priest, try my heart !

*The Monk.* Ah, traitor ! what ? 'tis well. Yes, he for whom  
That fair boy prattles hath a lifelong preacher  
No father yet sat under unconverted.  
We men are calm or hurricane. The heart  
Fills silently, and at the last wrong bursts.  
*He* laughs his merry creed out at all hours,  
And day and night looks treason.

*The Father.* Come the day  
When deeds shall back his looks !

*The Monk.* Well said, brave Roman !  
Thy hand ! and we are brothers. Shall we brook  
To see this Italy our fathers left us  
Held for an Austrian garden ?

*The Father.* Noble priest,  
Some say the garden bears strange fruit ere long,  
But the old soil is crop-sore, and craves fattening  
With German blood.

*The Monk.* Ah ?

*The Father.* Hast thou heard some whispers  
The wind brings from Sardinia ? Is it well ?

*The Monk.* All things are well, but silence and endurance.



*The Father.* Bend here ! the very spider on the wall  
Must not hear this—

*The Monk.* (Ay, what so pitiful,  
So loathsome, but it may connive with kings ?)

*The Father.* Hark in thine ear. The jolly lords of Naples,  
Florence, Turin, Verona, ay, Modena,  
And some too near to name, ride bravely,—eh ?  
What if the horse kick ?

*The Monk.* Ah ?

*The Father.* This is fair weather ;  
Worse grubs have grown to butterflies. How now,  
If these same Duchies spread their wings Republics ?  
What then, my Carbonaro ? Is it well ?

*The Monk.* 'Tis well. The poorest living face hath grace  
Beside a death'shead. That fierce king did well  
Who slew the priests of Baal, hew'd down his groves,  
And spoil'd his altars. But that king did better  
Who crown'd Moriah. 'Tis a zealot's faith  
That blasts the shrines of the false god, but builds  
No temple to the true.

*The Father.* Ay, what is Truth ?  
Pilate lacks answer.

*The Monk.* The bold man like thee,  
Who lays his life in a strange hand—

*The Father (starting).* Ah, Priest !  
His life—how now ?

*The Monk.* Jestest, my gentle Roman ?  
Wronged men like us, sworn to such deeds as ours,  
Leave courtly phrases when they speak of *treason*.  
Alas, poor Italy ! to tell his fortune

To whom a priest's lips can bring home rebellion,  
 Merits no sorcerer's fee. A truce to trifling.  
 What wasted words are these ! Thou art a father,  
 Have I not said to thee this boy that is  
 To die, may live—what more ?

*The Father.* No more. Sir Priest,  
 Thou takest me ill. There is no wild rebellion  
 So fierce I have not fire enough to light it.  
 If I had rather chosen to be free,  
 Of all men—so. Thou hast my faith, who holdest  
 My halter.

*The Mother.* And, by Heaven, thou hast it, Priest,  
 Though we were freer than a thousand winds !  
 Ay, and our lives a million million times  
 Lived and died over, so thou wilt but save  
 My child.

*The Monk.* Have I not said it ? Wherefore, friends,  
 Is this unseemly turbulence of passion ?  
 Did you not call me to your solemn council ?  
 Had I not told you how my brother died ?  
 Had you not wept with vision of those pangs,  
 Which in that boy's face yet shall rack your eyes ?—

*The Mother.* Shall ? Oh, my father ! Oh, my father

*The Monk.*

SHALL.

He who would conquer kings, *himself* must be  
 The first king conquer'd. Shall a rebel start  
 To hear rebellion ? Shall I have my counsel  
 Cried up and down the earth, like the small will  
 Of vulgar majesty ? He who would creep  
 To sleeping game is silent. Will they stand  
 Firm, think you, at the judgment and the scaffold,

Who start beneath the lintel of their homes,  
And rave at evening chat? No. He must die.

[*The Mother starts up, seizing a knife that lies near.*

*The Mother.* Priest! I am but a woman, and a weak one!  
I think thee faithful, and in that thought bless thee.  
I am a wife, a wife, Priest, and a true one;  
I think *him* brave, and in that thought revere him;  
But let me doubt ye—only let me doubt ye—  
And I would wash that hearthstone in your blood,  
If but the poorest spatter on the wall  
Would save my child!

*The Monk (aside).* Then by that chain I lead thee,  
Wild lioness.

(*Aloud*). There heaves a bosom meet  
To suckle Freedom. Calm thee, Roman mother,  
That yet shalt smile in Rome. The day may come  
To strike; till then seal up thine own hot lips,  
As thou wouldst seal thy foe's. Be true, a hero  
Shall call thee "mother!" Fail but in thy fealty  
To the least word of mine, my heaviest grief  
Is bliss beside thy lightest. Peace. This seal  
Makes the bond perfect. Now to calmer counsel.  
Thou say'st, brave Roman, that our lords ride fiercely,  
That the steed chafes already—see! he throws them.  
Who vaults into the saddle? Every flock  
Has slain its pigmy swain—salvite greges!  
But, patriot, who shall lead the sheep to pasture,  
And keep the wolf at bay?

*The Father.* Each separate state  
Must crown the sovereign people.

*The Monk.* By what name

Will men speak, think ye, of that seven-hill'd city,  
 Within whose catacombs dominion sleeps,  
 And in whose ruins Time himself walks lightly,  
 Lest she should stir below ?

*The Father.*

Rome.

*The Monk.*

And the rest,

How do you name them ?

*The Father.*

By the names they found

Noble enough to strike in ; thus, Milan.

*The Monk.* And why ? Is the sky bluer at Milan  
 Than where we stand ? Are the clouds red at noon ?  
 Or by what mystic omen doth the world  
 Call for this christening ? Doth Dame Nature, old,  
 And yearning to be fruitful in her dotage,  
 Breed names, and call them children ?

When you dream

Of our Italian fatherland, it glitters  
 With half a hecatomb of palaces,  
 Each royal. Your free heart is sad. You frown.  
 Strike off their crowns. Salute them commonweals,  
 And wake up shouting " Glory " ! How now, Roman,  
 If some strong arm stretching from sea to sea  
 Sweep all your pasteboard kickshaws to the ocean,  
 And leave us the broad field of Italy  
 To build up ROME ?

Marvel not, gentle friends,  
 Sprung out of yesterday, poor hearts, and growing  
 Like creeping plants, even to the size and fashion  
 Of what ye lean on—marvel not that we  
 Who worship Freedom with one soul, adore her

In different deity. As I have told you,  
 Dark fanes and reverend trophies, stones that might  
 Be portals to the world ; the fossil limbs  
 By which we build the giants of old time ;  
 Grey wonders stranger for decay ; strange fragments  
 Of forms once held divine, and still, like angels,  
 Immortal everywhere ; lone hermit columns,  
 Whereto the ideal hath no space to add  
 The pile they bore ; stern pediments that look'd  
 On altars where antipodes burnt incense,  
 And the three arms of the great globe piled up  
 Their several tribute ; all the sacred shades  
 Which the great Past receding from the world  
 Casts out of heaven on earth ;—these and like these,  
 The high, the deep, the eternal, the unbounded,  
 Were sponsors to my soul : and if my thought,  
 Where your more nice and neoteric fancy  
 Labours with townships, deals out continents,  
 Think it no marvel. Listen.

The sunrise

Of that dread day which found me brotherless,  
 Saw a pale face on a low bed. Despair  
 Gave life by taking it. That evening's sun  
 Fell on the empty pallet, and beside it  
 An arm'd man, flush'd to wildness.

Lost, alone,

Every sweet structure of my heart in heaps,  
 With the one terrible shock ; mazed, ignorant  
 Of all things but the one which cast them forth,  
 The desolation in my soul cried out,

And rushing to the ruins I fell down,  
The darkest ruin of all. I knelt and wept,  
And was a child before them, with the madness  
Of a man's heart. I fell upon my face.  
Strange sleep possess'd me. Through the hot short night,  
Across the hotter desert of my brain  
My life went past. All seasons new and old,  
All hours of day and night, all thoughts, fears, fancies,  
Born on this spot, met as in after-death  
About me ; and of each my tatter'd heart  
Begg'd healing and found none. At each new face  
I look'd up wild with hope, and look'd down fierce  
With chafed expectance. Then I rose and cursed  
All hope, all thought, all knowledge, all belief,  
And fell down still believing. With each hour  
In my spent soul some lingering faith went out,  
Woes that began in fire had burnt to blackness,  
The very good within me had grown grim,  
The frenzy of my shipwreck'd heart had thrown  
Its last crust overboard—then, then, oh God !  
Then in the midnight darkness of my passion,  
The veil was rent which hid the holy of holies,  
And I beheld and worshipp'd. Mad despair  
Rung out the desperate challenge—"What art thou,  
Unpitying presence ! which for years beside  
These stones hast stood before me, pass'd me, touch'd me,  
Shook my blind sense, and seal'd my eyes from seeing ?  
Tell me, that I may curse thee !"

The sun rose.

Forth towards me as in awful adjuration

Each ruin stretch'd appealing shades. There came  
Soft lightning on my soul, and by a voice  
Ineffable, and heard not with the ears,  
"ROME." At that sound a thousand thousand voices  
Spread it through all things. Each imperial column,  
Each prone grey stone, touch'd by the eloquent winds,  
Heard it and gave it back. Trees, woods and fountains  
In musical confusion, leaves, buds, blossoms—  
Even to small flowers unseen, with voices smaller  
Than treble of a fay—atoms of sound  
Whereof a thousand falling on one ear,  
The unwitting sense should count them troubled silence—  
Birds, brooks, and waterfalls,—all tongues of dawn,  
The very morning hum of summer time,  
Swell'd the sweet tumult ; early mists that lay  
Silent on hill-tops, vocal in the sun  
Roll'd off like waves of voices, the stirr'd air  
Sung with bright ecstasy. Down came the thunder,  
Like a vast hull cleaving the sea of sound,  
That lash'd up louder ; then the hills cried out,  
And emulous the valleys ; all the earth  
Shook with the sounding ardour, and methought  
My flush'd soul, drunk with zeal, leap'd high and shouted,  
ROME ! With that name, incomprehensible beauty  
Fill'd the still gratulate air from earth to heaven,  
And knowing I knew not. Even as one dead  
I fell. As though that one great sight accomplish'd  
All consciousness, and the progressive sense  
Reaching the goal stood still.

Ere I awoke,

The sun had mounted the proud throne of noon,  
Received the homage of the world, and slept  
From his high-place well-pleased.

Calm, brave, serene,

Refresh'd as from a sleep of ages, weak  
As a birth-weary mother, but yet strong  
In cast-out sorrows, I stood up and gazed  
With long looks of sweet wonder. The fierce craving  
In my lank hungry soul had ceased. The thirst  
That burn'd my heart was quench'd. The mystic yearning  
For something ever near, and ever far,  
That made my life one dream of wasting fever,  
Was over. All those indistinct strange voices  
Wherein, like waters underground, great truths  
Were heaving in my heart, and lash'd its sides  
To bursting ; those dim tones wherein, like fragrance  
From troubled flowers at midnight, unseen balm  
Went up in my dark soul, all the forerunners,  
The thousand messengers by which this night  
Had told me it would come,—all partial knowledge  
Before the consummation fell away  
As things that had no office ; wither'd up  
Like blossom on the fruit. Thus it must be  
That noble man who deems his nature born  
As vast as truth, must sweat, and toil, and suffer,  
And overcome—enduring. When the heart  
Adds a new planet to its heaven, great portents  
Clash the celestial influence ; strange signs  
Of coming dread, mysterious agencies,  
And omens inconceivable convulse



The expectant system, while the stranger sails  
Still out of sight in space. Dim echoings  
Not of the truth, but witnessing the truth—  
Like the resounding thunder of the rock  
Which the sea passes—rushing thoughts like heralds,  
Voices which seem to clear the way for greatness,  
Cry advent in the soul, like the far shoutings  
That say a monarch comes. These must go by,  
And then the man who can out-watch this vigil  
Sees the apocalypse. Oh that first hour  
Within the Eden of a quiet soul !  
Oh for that bounteous hour, to him whose youth,  
Bred up in grief's sad penury, hath found  
Joy's daily pittance all too poor to lay  
One pleasance by ; oh that pierian hour  
When first the plenteous life o'erwelling sends  
Its irrigating streams before the face  
Of the young hope, and decks, in frondent distance,  
To-morrow with the verdure of to-day.  
That hour when first the slipping foot grows firm  
Upon some plot of present, and we gaze  
From the sufficient rock with softening eyes  
Across the green sweet pastures of the future,  
And for the first time dare to look on them  
As heritage. How the exulting thoughts,  
Like children on a holiday, rush forth  
And shout, and call to every humming bee,  
And bless the birds for angels ! Oh that hour !  
In the reflected sunshine of remembrance  
My heart is melting. Twilight and the dews

Proclaim me parlous. 'Tis a sorry string  
 That, being struck, is silent. Farewell, Romans.  
 Meet me to-morrow here. This is no mood  
 To plan stern deeds. Farewell. Remember, courage,  
 Truth, silence. If you fail in either, look  
 Upon your boy.

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 SCENE VII.

*A lonely Spot. The turf-grown site of some old Roman  
 Amphitheatre.*

*A meeting of Minstrels. An aged Bard presides.  
 The Monk enters.*

*The Monk (to a Minstrel).* Sir,  
 I have walk'd far and crave a seat.

*Minstrel (to another).* His reverence  
 Is weary and would sit. Is it against  
 The statutes of our order?

*Second Minstrel.* Holy Sir,  
 There are good feet that do not walk Parnassus.  
 Behold us here a minstrel convocation,  
 And deem it no irreverence if we say,  
 That in that company of bards a priest  
 Lacks civic rights.

*The Monk.* Sir, *thou* art not yet free  
 Of that most holy guild. Thy soul hath yet

To learn the instinctive flight which cleaves the air  
 Of immortality. I do perceive  
 As yet it wings by sight. The dove that bears  
 The poet's message starts from that pure height  
 Where earthly fashions fade. Let common eyes  
 Read men in frock and cowl. The creeping thing  
 That harbours in the bark knows not the region  
 Where the fruit hangs. I hoped, Sirs, to find here  
 A nobler estimation.

*Another Minstrel.* And thou shalt.

*Others.* Bravo! Well said. Hear Giulio!

*Another.* This guitar

Its face, Sir Priest, like mine, is brown with age;  
 Find me the newest dainty from Cremona  
 That dares a bar with it!

*Another.* Or mine, and yet

'Twas the sole heritage my grandsire left.

*Another.* Would we, Sir Priest, exchange these twisted  
 entrails

For chords of gold?

*Another.* Faith, I would string my lute

With hangman's hemp, if it made music.

*Others.* Ay,

And I. And I. And I.

*The President.* Sir and good father,

You see us here a humble company—

I speak the language of the world, Sir, nor

Affirming nor denying—(the wayfarer

Of many lands is not responsible

For each vernacular)—Sir, in what stature

We may be seen by the renewing angel  
Some few years hence I say not, but you see us  
Being what we are, met to pursue an art  
Lightly esteem'd, but which to name divine  
Is not the filial rapture of a son,  
Since in the change of time it hath not changed ;  
Indigenous to all the earth. A spirit  
Evoked by many, but a bound familiar  
To no magician yet. The equal tenant  
Of loftiest palace and of lowliest cot,  
Treading the rustic and the royal floor  
To the same step and time. In every age,  
With all the reverence that man claims as man,  
Preaching to clouted clown, and with no more  
To thronèd kings. The unrespective friend—  
In such celestial wise as gods befriend—  
By turns of haughtiest monarch, humblest swain ;  
And with impartial love and power alike  
Ennobling prince and peasant. Giving all,  
Receiving never. What else makes a god ?  
What human art looks so divine on earth ?  
And, as you tell us, seraphs in high heaven  
Find nothing worthier. Sir, accept me well,  
Let not these lutes, pipes, harps, and dulcimers,  
And outward signs of the musician's trade,  
Mis-teach you of us. Reverend Sir, believe not  
That—priests of Harmony—our service knows  
One only of her temples. Sir, we hope  
One day to serve her where the ears of flesh  
Cannot inherit ; where material sounds

Enrobe no more her pure divinity.  
 And we, *uncumber'd* by the aids of sense,  
 Shall see, and in the silent universe  
 Adore her. Holy Sir, each minstrel here  
 Is poet also.

*The Monk.* Canst thou tell me, friend,  
 What 'tis to be a poet?

*President.* Such the theme  
 Of this day's contest.

*The Monk.* Let me strike a string  
 In such a strife.

*President.* Read thou this riddle for us,  
 And, father, this my chair I abdicate,  
 And crown thee king of bards.

*The Monk.* Nay, friend, forbear—  
 Prithee no kings. I would believe, good brother,  
 All honest here. Have you a kind harp, friends,  
 That for a stranger's sake will do sweet duty  
 In unaccustom'd hands.

*One.* Take mine.

*Another.* Or mine.

*Another.* Or mine.

*Another (aside).* Now, Sackcloth!

*Another (aside).* Look to hear Apollo  
 Discourse Church music!

*Another (aside).* To the buttery-hatch,  
 Ye strolling thrummers. 'Tis alms-giving day,  
 My life the godly almoner is good  
 At broken victuals. How many stale masses,  
 Crusts scriptural and classic bones—

*Another.* Fie, Henri,  
 Thy wanton ditty !  
*Henri.* Ingrate ! wot I not  
 The priest was coming ?  
*Another (aside).* Hush, clean ears, clean ears,  
 A psalm at least !  
*Another.* Surely the Song of Songs.  
*Henri.* Ay, but no Solomon's.  
*Others.* Friends, friends, friends,  
 Silence.

*The Monk sings.* The poet bends above his lyre and strikes—  
 No smile, no smile of rapture, on his face ;—  
 The poet bends above his lyre and strikes,—  
 No fire, no fire of passion, in his eye ;—  
 The poet bends above his lyre and strikes,  
 No flush, no prophet's flush, upon his cheek ;—  
 Calm as the grand white cloud where thunders sleep,  
 Like a wrapt listener—not in vain to listen —  
 Feeling the winds with every sense to catch  
 Some far sound wandering in the depths of space,  
 The poet bends above his lyre and strikes.

[*Interlude of music.*]

The poet bends above his lyre and strikes.  
 Ah Heaven ! I hear ! Again. Ah Heaven, I hear !  
 Again :—the vacant eyes are moist with tears !  
 Again :—they gleam with vision. Bending lower,  
 Crowding his soul upon the strings.—Again.  
 Hark, hark, thou heart that leapest ! Ye thrill'd fibres !  
 See the triumphant minstrel in the dust,  
 To his own music. Hark ! Angels in heaven

Catch it on golden harps! Down float their echoes  
 Richer than dews of Paradise. Inspired,  
 Tuning each chord to the enchanted key,  
 The poet sweeps the strings and wakes, awe-stricken,  
 The sounds that never die. From hill to hill  
 They vibrate round the world of time, as deep  
 Calleth to deep. [*Here the Monk ceases to sing.*]

But note like this stirs not  
 The wind of every day. And 'tis the ear  
 To know it, woo it, wait for it, and stand  
 Amid a Babel deaf to other speech,  
 That makes a poet. And from ear like this,  
 That troubling of the air which common men  
 Call harmony, falls unrespected off,  
 As balls from a charm'd life.

Hear yet again  
 A better parable. The good man hears  
 The voice in which God speaks to men. The poet,  
 In some wrapt moment of intense attendance,  
 The skies being genial and the earthly air  
 Propitious, catches on the inward ear  
 The awful and unutterable meanings  
 Of a divine soliloquy.

Soul-trembling  
 With incommunicable things, he speaks  
 At infinite distance. So a babe in smiles  
 Repeats the unknown and unknowable  
 Joys of a smiling mother.

*President.* Victor, hail!  
 How say you, friends—a triumph?

*Many.*

Crown him, crown him !

*The Monk.* Good friends, fair brothers, how have I  
deserved this ?

Whose chattels have I seized, whose hearth profaned ?

Whom have I slain, whose daughter have I ravish'd,

That you should cry of *crowns* ?

*President.*

Sir, reverend Sir,

This chair of state is yours.

*All.*

Ascend, ascend !

*The Monk.* Friends, brother bards, since thus you bid me  
call you,

With a long weary journey must I buy

The honours of this moment ? When I spent

Those labours—all my wealth—they were disbursed,

In the shrewd estimate that so much outlay

Invested in your wisdom could but yield

A goodly increase. Only on such venture

Prudence, the soul's stern sacristan, paid down

The perils of this pilgrimage. Which of you,

Receiving wherewithal to buy a harp,

Shall spend it on a chaplet ? Which among you,

Playing the overture to some mild air

Of sweet attendance and humility,

Succeeds it with a march ? My gentle friends,

Let me go even as I came,—as much

Wiser as you may please—in all things else

No wit less humble. Sir, and my good father,

Resume the place of honour. These grey hairs

And time-taught looks beseem it. I beseech you,

Speak more at length. Methinks the chorister years



Must needs chant nobly in such reverend walls.  
 For me, I claim the seat of a disciple,  
 And if in any wise I have excell'd,  
 And I yet fear, dear friends, you do mistake  
 The stature of your courtesy for that  
 Of my desert—reward me, ere we part,  
 With one more hearing.

*Many shout.* Ten ! Agreed. Agreed.  
 Agreed. Long live the Monk. Well said !

*President.* Companions,  
 You have heard the conqueror. While we have forgotten  
 Our wonted duties for this episode,  
 The unoblivious sun hath paused not once ;  
 Our time is far spent, and five harps are still  
 Unstruck. Hath any brother yet unheard  
 Any unbaptized child of voice or lute  
 Born since our last song-feast, whereon he craves  
 Fraternal benediction ? Let each such  
 Stand forth.

*A Minstrel.* I have a tale of rural pity,  
 Set in a rustic measure to such music  
 As the uncertain winds, and rustling leaves,  
 And devious sounds of night made round the heads  
 Of them it sings. A very simple sorrow,  
 To be heard only in the silent hours  
 It sigh'd in. Use it gently, Sirs ; I call it  
 "The Winter's Night."

*President.* Acquit thee, brother !

*All.*

Hear !

*Minstrel sings.* An she stood at its father's gate,

At its father's gate she stood,

With her baby at her breast ;

'Twas about the hour of rest—

There were lights within the place—

The old moon began to sink,

(Long, like her, upon the wane,)

It grew dark ; she drew her hood

Close about her pallid face ;

At the portal down she sate,

Where she will not sit again.

" Little one," she slowly said,

Bending low her lowly head,

" In all this wide world only thee,

And my shame, *he* gave to me.

When *thou* camest I did think

On that other gift of his—

Hating that I dreaded this.

Thou art fair—but so was he ;

'Tis a winning smile of thine,—

Ah ! what fatal praise it is !—

One such smile once won all mine.

Little one, I not repine,

It befits me well to wait

My lord's will, till I be dead—

Once it was a gentler will !"

With that, a night-breeze full chill,

Shook some dead leaves from the lime ;

At the sad sound, loud and burly

Like a warder, went the blast  
Round about the lordly house ;  
Hustled her with menial wrath,  
Much compelling forth her cast,  
Who was all too fain to go ;  
She sank down upon the path—  
She cower'd lower, murmuring low,  
“ What was I that I should earn,  
For I loved him, more return  
Than I look'd for of the sun,  
When he smiled upon me early  
In our merry milking-time ? ”

Then was silence all ; the mouse  
Rustled with the beechen mast,  
The lank fox yelp'd round, the owl  
Floating, shriek'd pale horror past ;  
Strange and evil-omen'd fowl  
Croak'd about her, and knew not.  
Round her had the last bat fed.  
“ Little one,” she said, “ the cot  
Where I bore thee was too low  
For a haughty baron's bride.  
Little one, I hope to go  
Where the palace-halls are wide ;  
When thou prattlest at his knee,  
Wilt thou sometimes speak of me ?  
Tell him, in some eve,” she said,  
“ Where thou knowest I shall be.  
When he hears that I am grand,

In those mansions ever fair,  
Will he look upon me there  
As a lady of the land,  
And think no more in scorn  
Upon thee and on the dead ? ”  
All below the garden banks,  
Where the blighted aspens grew,  
Faded leaves faint breezes blew,  
As in pity, round her. Then  
Low whispering in her plaintive plight,  
Her shivering babe she nearer nurst.  
“ ’Tis a bitter night,” said she,  
“ Little one, a dreary night.  
Little shalt thou bless the first,  
Pass’d upon thy father’s ground.  
Ay ! cower closer in thy nest,  
Birdie ! that didst never build  
There is warmth enough for thee,  
Though the frost shall split the tree  
Where it rocks.”  
“ Little one,” she said again,  
“ Babe,” she said, “ my little son,  
Thou and I at last must part ;  
There is in my freezing heart  
Only life enough for one.  
By the crowing of the cocks,  
Early steps will tread the way,  
Could mine arms but wrap thee round  
’Till the dawning of the day ! ”  
Silent then she seem’d to pray,  
Then she spoke like one in pain,

“ Little one, it shall be done,  
I will keep thee back no more ;  
It were sweet to go together,  
If thou couldst be mine alone ;  
As it is I must restore  
Treasure not mine own.  
All the gift and the sweet thanks  
Will be over by to-morrow.  
He must weep some tears to see  
What at morn they will bring in  
Where she dared not living come.  
He will take thee to his home,  
And bless the mother in the child.  
Little one, 'tis sweet to me,  
Who once gave him all I had—  
Hoped it duty, found it sin—  
Once more to give all, but now  
Take no shame, and no more sorrow  
Than a death-pang sets at rest.”  
Closer then her babe she prest,  
Chiller sank the wintry weather.  
Once again the owl cried near,  
Once more croak'd the strange night-bird ;  
From the stagnance of the fosse  
Lorn pale mists, like winding-gear,  
Hung about her and look'd sad ;  
Then the blast, that all this while  
Slumber'd by a freezing fountain,  
Burst out rudely, like a prince  
From a midnight revel rushing,  
In his train a thousand airs,

Each ambitious of his guilt,  
Each as cruel, cold and wild,  
Each as rugged, chill and stark,  
Hurtled round their leader crushing  
All the fretwork of the dark ;  
Frosty palace, turret and tower,  
Mosque and arabesque, mist-built  
By winter fairies. Then, grown gross  
With the licence of the hour,  
They smote the mother and the child !  
Dark night grew darker, not a smile  
Came from one star. The moon long since  
Had sunk behind the mountain.  
At the mirkest somewhat stirred  
The sere leaves, where the mother sate ;  
For a moment the babe cried,  
Something in the silence sigh'd,  
And the night was still. Oh fate !  
What hadst thou done ? Oh that hard sight  
Which morn must see ! When Winter went  
About the earth at dawn, he rent  
His locks in pain, and cast grey hairs  
Upon it as he past. So when  
Maids, poor mother, wail thy lot—  
Mournful at the close of day—  
By that legendary spot  
Oft they tell us, weeping, how  
Hoar frost lay on thy pale brow  
When they found thee, and was not  
Paler than the clay.

*A Minstrel.* A grievous tale !

*The Monk.* Where's he that dares to say so ?

Liar ! thou art not grieved. Any vile Austrian  
May serve thy sister so to-morrow night,  
And he that wears the longest sword among ye  
Shall fear to draw it !

*A young Minstrel.* Here's my blade ! Show me  
The bloodless German !

*The Monk.* Youth ! respect thy master !  
Dost thou talk treason ? What, boy, if the German  
Be bloodless ? He hath blood enough to rule thee !  
Tut ! sheath thy maiden sword—leave pantomime  
To puppets—I but said thou art not grieved.  
And I said well. Such thews as thine being grieved  
Ne'er yet were idlers. Tut, tut, man, be grateful,  
Thine owner feeds thee well. I never saw  
A sleeker slave.

*The Minstrel.* Slave !

*President.* Friends, friends, friends, I pray you,  
Silence. Benvolio's song !

*A Minstrel.* I have a fancy  
About a rose ; sung on the morn I saw  
My mother's first grey hair. Let your harsh thoughts  
Breathe gently on it—it is *overblown*.

Oh maiden ! touch gently the rose overblown,  
And think of the mother thy childhood hath known ;  
Smile not on the buds that exult from her stem,  
Lest her pallor grow paler that thou lovest them.  
From their beauties, oh maid, each bright butterfly chase,  
'Till his duties are paid to that dew-faded face,

And forbid the gay bee one deceitful sweet tone,  
 Till his vows are all said to the rose overblown.  
 Sorrow, oh maid, is more grateful than bliss,  
 Rosebuds were made for the light breeze to kiss.  
 And woo how thou wilt in the soft hope to see  
 Some bright bursting blossom that blooms but for thee,  
 Weep thy fond wish, thou shalt look up to find  
 Thy tears worn as gems to beguile the next wind.  
 Turn then thine eyes to the rose overblown,  
 Speak of its place in a tremulous tone,  
 Sigh to its leaves as they fall one by one,  
 And think how the young hopes the heart used to own  
 Are all shedding fast—like the rose overblown.  
 Yes turn in thy gloom to the rose overblown,  
 Reverently gather each leaf that hath gone,  
 Watch every canker and wail every streak,  
 As thou countest the lines on thy mother's dim cheek ;  
 Twilight by twilight, and day after day,  
 Keep sweet attendance on sweeter decay.  
 When all is over weep tears—two or three—  
 And perchance long years hence, when the grass grows o'er thee,  
 Fond fragrant tribute to days long by-gone,  
 Shall be shed on thy grave by some rose overblown.

*The Monk.*

We are a wealthy people

In all the faculties of woe. We have  
 Our sighs for roses, elegies for sparrows,  
 And seas of salt tears for deceased gold-fish ;  
 We eat our pet-lambs in a mourning robe,  
 And bury game-cocks with " the point of war."  
 And since we weep no tears for *thee*, my country,



It needs must be thou hast deserved thy death.  
Rome, Rome ! I was deceived ; I thought thee murder'd,  
Ay, foully, foully murder'd !

*A Minstrel.*

**Thou hast thought**

Well.

*Others.* Bravo, Pietro !

*Others.*

**Hear him !**

*The Monk.*

**This is treason.**

**A priest, I cannot hear my sovereign slander'd !  
One word more, I denounce you !**

*The President.*

**Friends, attend !**

**Silence !**

Vicenzo, venerable brother,  
Methinks I heard thy harp. Its youthful strings  
Sound to me through the music of those years,  
Those threescore years, since first we play'd together,  
As the dear voice of a beloved girl,  
In virgin throng of louder choristers,  
While all the troop contend before the ear,  
Passeth alone and free to the hid heart.  
Dreaming of youth doth make me young again !  
Friend, thou hast been a man of grief, and though  
My dream of thy first music be a dream,  
Thy sounds to-day are sweeter. Such a touch  
Hath gracious wisdom. The great harmony  
Of a most sad sweet life hath been play'd out  
Upon those strings, and sympathetic chords  
Repeat it. Holy brother, there are some  
In this good company who know thee not.  
Forego the privilege of years, and lift,

A moment, all the mantle from thine heart.  
 Our eyes are blind with noonday, and our brows  
 Ache with the tropics. Let us with chaste awe  
 Stand in the mellow evening of thy voice,  
 Before the old man's soul—the rayless sun  
 Seen through the mist of sorrows.

Thanks, dear brother,  
 That strain replies. I hear it, like a chime  
 To vespers.

*Vicenzo.* Friend, why is thy speech of “brothers?”  
 My brother died. I heard last night, in the dark,  
 How the first Christians spake to one who went  
 Where I shall soon behold him.

*Some.* Good Vicenzo!

*Others.* Hear!

*Others.* Hear Vicenzo.

*Vicenzo.* Clamorous sirs, you are wise!  
 Give your praise now. You will need all your silence  
 When I have sung. The men of whom I speak  
 Lived by the prime tradition, ere the hands  
 Of ages soil'd it, or the guilt that shrunk  
 Before that bare intolerable witness  
 Bound it in gems and purple. Sirs, my lay  
 Is simple as their faith.

[*He sings.*

Brother, there is a vacant spot within our holy band,  
 And poorer is our earthly lot by one strong heart and hand.  
 Yet, brother, it were ill to weep, when life hath been so drear,  
 That we are left alone to keep its painful vigil here.  
 'Twere ill if thou hast trod the way to count the labouring  
 hours,

Or mourn that sorrow fill'd thy cup with hastier hand than  
ours.

Sleep softly by thy bending tree, till death's long sleep be o'er,  
That thou canst not remember, we remember thee the more.  
Sleep softly,—that thine heart hath pass'd through all death's  
deep distress,

To such calm rest as now thou hast, shall make us dread it  
less.

Sleep softly, brother, sleep. But, oh, if there are hopes more  
blest

Than sleep, where seasons come and go about a dreamless  
rest ;

If we may deem this grave a shrine which summer rites  
observe,

Where autumn pours the votive wine, and white-robed winters  
serve ;

If we may think that those who now sit side by side with God,  
Have sent for thee to ask thee how we tread the path they  
trod ;

Oh, brother, if it be not sin when God hath broke the chain  
Of earthly thought, to bind thee in its fever'd links again,  
Thus much of all that earth did know, and all that life hath  
given,

The sadness of our love below bequeathes thy bliss in heaven ;  
Remember what the bounden bear, though thou for aye art  
free,

And speak of us as kindly there, as here we think of thee.

*The Monk.* "Remember what the bounden bear !" Old man,  
We cannot sing this song. There may be lands  
Where chains are heavy. Here in Italy  
We wear them as the draught-ox wears his bells—

*One.* Priest !

*The Monk.* Hark that martial strain ! Ye gods, do all  
Dead tongues cry out at once !

*A Minstrel.* You Romans ! see  
The vision of Quirinus !

*The Monk.* Ha, ha, ha !

*The Minstrel (sings).* Who shall say what thoughts of glory  
life's mean paths unhonour'd tread,  
Like those rays of distant suns, that pass us, viewless, overhead ?  
For the heaviest heart that sleepeth hath its heavy sleeping  
dream,

Like the dull light on the ripple of a duller twilight stream ;  
But, oh poet, if the dullard hath a soul beyond thy ken,  
Who shall paint the hero's vision, who among the sons of  
men ?

Who shall paint him, wrapt and lonely, when the god within  
him speaks,

And the passing skirts of Fate smite the blood into his cheeks ;  
When the future on the ocean of his great soul hangs like  
night,

And some hull of thought comes ploughing all its midseas  
into light ?

Who shall paint him leaning on the Present, standing on the  
Past,

Gazing o'er the furthest Future deep into the stormy *Last* ;  
Gazing where on the remotest verge the nether mists are  
riven,—

A giant with an oak-tree staff, looking from sea-sands to  
heaven ?

[*Interlude of music.*

One dull day of indolence, the new-thatch'd city being all  
built,

On his sheath'd sword bent Quirinus, with his hand upon the  
hilt.

Round the sun's hid place on high all the stolid heaven was  
dead,

All the flat-floor'd earth below him look'd a temple domed  
with lead ;

Not a voice from all the forests ! not a beam from all the  
floods !

Sadder for that early autumn, like cold sunshine, lit the woods.  
Far, the arms of Latian hills held on high a city of power ;  
With the eye of lust Quirinus burnt its beauties tower by  
tower,

Till the conscious Latian hills, jealous of the conqueror's mien,  
Proudly drew the mists of morning, decent, round the ravish'd  
scene.

Waking from the imperial dream, said Quirinus, looking  
towards Rome,

"So the mist of time descending hides me from the years to  
come !"

Near, below, a rushing torrent its long dance of beauty led,  
And a forest-beast of grandeur cross'd it with a stately tread ;  
Golden ran the rapid river gleaming though the skies were  
cold,

Far into the Sabine distance, mantling with its sands of gold.  
Said Quirinus, sad, but proudly, gazing with a look sublime,  
"Gods ! so fording life, would I send golden sands down  
streams of time !"

He look'd up to heaven, and he look'd down upon the river  
strand :

Smiling through the crystal water, shining lay the untroubled  
sand.

Said Quirinus, proud, but sadly, gazing upon frith and firth,  
“ Gods ! so shall the tide of ages rase my footsteps from the  
earth ! ”

Sat the sun in his pavilion ; the dark drapery, stern and even,  
Hanging earthward. Before noon the west winds dancing  
through high heaven,

Fill'd with sudden mirth, drew back the giant folds with  
hands profane ;

Pleased he saw the earth, and like a young hot prince began  
to reign.

All this while Quirinus bent heroic eyes that could not weep,  
On a tear of dew that lay dull amid the grass asleep ;

Even while he gazed a sunbeam, slanting from its radiant  
path,

Dipt into the dew, and came forth like a goddess from the  
bath.

Then Quirinus—“ That such lot were mine, ye arbiters afar !  
Gods ! ye touch the sleeping water and it wakens to a star ! ”

While he looks the sun is higher, while he looks the star  
grows old,

While he looks, the dews are lying, as the dews lie, dead and  
cold.

Then Quirinus—all the hero looking sadness while he said,  
“ Gods ! so shall the sun of glory one day leave me cold and  
dead ! ”

Then he gazed, as heroes gaze, upon whom,—conscious,—  
earth and skies

Seem gazing back. To their live silence all his living soul  
replies,

“ Thou who knowest me, whom thus I know,—Eternal as  
thou art,

Oh thou visible ! how is it with me in thy silent heart ? ”

Then the rock beside him crumbled in the noon-heat stone  
by stone,

“ Gods ! the very earth may rot ere a fame like mine be  
grown ! ”

Then a salt wind—like a sea-ghost sick of land—faint voices  
bore,

“ Gods ! but once to hear the ages booming on the future  
shore ! ”

Then he look’d the sun in the face, like an eagle in his death-  
sorrow.

“ Gods ! the very stars themselves are nearer to us than to-  
morrow ! ”

Then in rapture, all the godhead of his line about his brow—  
“ Mother ! Dionæan Mother ! that the years to come were  
*now !* ”

Soft Idalian incense laid him languid on the amorous sod.

At the softest a great thunder shook the mountain like a god.  
Starting from the Paphian trance, the hero leap’d in the  
sunlight,

All his sudden soul o’erlooking the dull sense of mortal sight ;  
Staring, staring in the air, high over the Roman town,  
Staring, staring pale and deadly where the future years came  
down.

Dost thou see them, as I see them, like a great mist sinking  
slow,

With the unborn dead o’er-pictured, and the things that shall  
be ? Lo,

Woes that throw no shade on joy ; joys that shed no light on  
woe,

Flush'd with being yet to be, full of soul that makes no sign,  
Tarquin chaste beside Lucretia, Tullius mute by Catiline.

Dost thou see them, as I see them, like a haze upon the sky,  
Painted with dumb agonies, and woes that neither strive nor  
cry ;

Spell-bound victors unpursuing, routed hosts that do not fly ;  
Lifeless in the form of life, with ineffectual grandeur great,  
As the foemen, Good and Ill, twin-slumber in the womb of Fate?

Dost thou see them, as I see them, dread as when the demon  
of rain

From cloudland verge shakes out a veil of storms across the  
lower plain ?

Dost thou see them, wider, wider, from the mountains to the  
main,

Peopling, peopling either heaven, till troubled with the  
infinite sight,

Both horizons flush'd at once attest them in distemper'd light?

*[Interlude of music.]*

Dost thou see them, as I see them, like a great mist sinking  
slow,

From the everlasting height, floating in celestial show,  
Silent vast, like heaven unroll'd, to the eternal hills below ?

Lo ! they touch the earth. Ye Gods ! are mine eye-balls  
crazed with wine ?

Shock of life, like midnight lightning, shouts along the  
leaping line.



Lo ! the children of the ages on the fields of fame beneath,  
Each in clamour springs from sleep as one day he shall spring  
from death.

Gods ! that cry of startled being ! Gods ! that din of life  
sublime,

Each convulsive form begins the many-colour'd work of time,  
Each in agony of action flashes through his frenzied part,  
As in deadly moments years of life gleam through the  
heaving heart.

Gods ! I shall go wild with sight ! Whirling arms and  
lambent eyes,

Raging, clash in sounds that mock the sadder surge of shrieks  
and sighs ;

Each assumes the sudden future, each in turn defied defies,  
Stream in air the Sabine tresses, Brutus strikes and Cæsar  
dies !

So some host of rayless meteors smite our air, and mad with  
might,

Burst in storms of stars, and charge in flaming legions through  
the night.

All this while Quirinus stood, wrapt as the Python, grand as  
Jove,

His face a microcosm, wherein the passions of the ages strove.  
Downward, downward, solemn and slow, the dreamy pageant  
dim descends,

A man's height upward life,—no more. In heaven the dead,  
on earth the fiends.

Downward, downward, till the valley, line unconscious line  
succeeds,

Mingling yet a moment lifeless with the life that strives and bleeds.

See the insatiate plain engulf ! See the still renew'd array,  
Touching earth, explode with life, and hurtling sink out of the day.

Gods ! the tapestries of heaven o'erwrought with fate,  
majestic, fell,

And burnt upon the earth, and dropt their flaming fragments  
into hell !

See on high incessant hosts, to where the heavenly vistas  
close,

And the very height of heights with a higher advent glows,  
Dyed with change : as I have seen when wild meridian moons  
are bright,

Stormy dreams of rainbows colour all the troubled soul of  
night.

See below exhaustless life—hark the still-renewing roar  
Of successive being kindling from the mountains to the shore !  
Tumult as of full-grown nations starting into crashing birth ;  
Tumult, tumult, wide as heaven, wild along the rocking earth ;  
Tumult, tumult, from the dizzy maddening mounts' distracted  
crowd,

Pealing out till both horizons own it like a bloody cloud !

With such flame and thunder, in the Gallic madman's vision  
dark,

So the ordnance of the world, drawn up, might hail the  
Omniaroh !

All this while Quirinus stood, gazing with a wilder gaze,  
Heaving with a Delphic fury, shouting to the coming days !  
Warm'd into the gait of time, he springs before the march of  
things,

Imperial with an age of empire, royal with a world of kings!  
Stand, Quirinus! Hold thine own! Reel not, giant drunk  
with power!

Did no demigod come down to stay thee in that desperate  
hour,

When Fortune blew her loudest blast, and, mindful of the ills  
in store,

Play'd a flourish ere she changed her awful stop for evermore;  
And Rome, upon the hill of fame, above whose height the  
thunderer nods,

Culminated like a globe, and paused before the gasping gods,  
Awhile in dreadful poise. One moment suns smiled on it dark  
and cold,

And lit a star. It shone. And then (like that tremendous  
stone of old)

Recoiling to infernal depths shook heaven, down-whirling as  
it fell,

Through red storms of molten glories lash'd up from the soil  
of hell!

How shalt *thou* behold that hour? for ah! the generous and  
the brave

Spring upon the surge of fate, but ebb not with the ebbing  
wave.

In that hour the Dionæan caught him up to heaven; that he  
Beholding as a god beholdeth, seeing, might survive to see!

*The Monk (stepping forward).* Ye spell-bound men,  
Who stand and stare each other in the face  
As though it were an auspice, do you dare  
Behold on earth what your translated Sire  
Saw from the heavens? Didst thou not even there,  
Oh hero! with thy strong humanities

Startle the impassive gods ; with mortal cries  
 Stir the still air of immortality,  
 And with thine earthly faculty of tears  
 Distain the empyrean ?

[*Silence. They whisper among themselves.*]

*President.* Sir, and brother,  
 Show us this vision.

*The Monk.* Doth the heart speak there ?  
 Wot you there have been sights ere now which turn'd  
 The seer into stone ? There have been words  
 Which made graves tenantless, and hunt the dead  
 Shrieking through hell. There have been tongues that smote  
 The lazy air wherein the gnat did dance,  
 And it hath dropp'd down molten on a soul,  
 And branded it for ever. You know this,  
 And you will hear ?

*A Shout.* And we will hear !

*The Monk.* Your blood  
 Be on your heads !

*A shout.* Be on our heads and thine !

*The Monk.* And mine. If ye be brothers, I shall die  
 With you, and if not, by you. Death is death. [*He is silent.*]

*The President (after awhile).* My brother, we attend thee.

*The Monk.* You will hear me ?  
 You will behold ? I do beseech that man  
 Who owns a faint heart, friends, to bear it forth  
 Beyond your patriot circle ; half a bowshot  
 Will save him. I shall speak low. By the gods,  
 It should be sung in whispers.

What ! not one ?

What! you draw nearer? Be not rash, my brothers,  
 Those Cretan mazes that outlie the heart  
 Can no man tread so swiftly. I shall pause.

[*He is silent—then continues.*]

It is a fearful thing to stand in the path  
 Of destiny. Here on this bridge am I,  
 And you, poor souls, upon the fateful bank  
 Roam up and down, and cast your wistful eyes  
 To the Cimmerian shores, whose twilight reign  
 Your sense, acclimated to Acheron,  
 Mistakes for day. I hold ye back, poor shades,  
 And with a right hand blister'd with the flames,  
 Point to a way of fire. You cannot see  
 The Elysian fields beyond it, and what god  
 Commands you to believe me?

My poor brothers,

Pass.

*Some.* This is madness!

*Some.*

Hush! behold him.

*Others.*

Wake,

Dreamer!

*The Monk.* I can see nothing in the heaven  
 Or earth why next year should be worse than this;  
 I do not learn from any sign in the sky  
 That you shall dance less lightly at the fair,  
 Or drink your pottle weaker at the wake,  
 Or find the wench less willing at the wedding,  
 Or sing less often in the castle hall,  
 Or think the rich man's nod a poorer fee,  
 Or sit less thankful at the menial's fare,

Or rear one chubby slave the less or more,  
 Or share their mother on worse usury  
 With yonder German—

*Some.* Shame—

*Others.* Hold!

*Others.* Are we clowns?

*Others.* Peace. Hear him out—hear the priest out. Down  
 with him.

Hear him. Hear, hear, hear, hear him out. Down with him.

*The Monk.* 'Tis a hard fate. As yet you are not guilty;  
 As yet the dull Maremma of the future  
 From the mephitic stagnance of the past  
 Stretches as unforbidden. But hear me,  
 And the Egyptian curse turns it to blood!  
 Yet you might tread it—with the march of life  
 Stir the pestiferous slime of days, till weak  
 Or sturdy vitals, soon or late, drop each  
 In his appointed hole. Why should I speak?  
 Friends, 'tis a fearful time. As yet your eyes  
 Have not been open'd to know good from evil.  
 The dread of the great hour before the fall  
 Gathers upon my soul. Now must I do  
 The miracle which paints the universe.  
 You stand before me here all men, all brothers,  
 And I must give you sight. And, seeing, he  
 Who is not straight transfigured to a saint,  
 Must blacken to a fiend. This is that water  
 That rots the adulteress—dare ye drink?

*Some.* Now mercy!

*Others.* Ay, ay, ay, to the dregs.

*Others.*

Pour, priest, pour, pour.

*One.* S'death ! do you mock us ? Speak !

*The Monk.*

I pray you, patience,

I pray you, patience. These are times, my brothers,  
When the grand Roman habit is a dress

For no man's masquerade. [*They continue to shout*]. Beseech  
you, patience,

Patience, sweet friends ! The cap of liberty  
Is not a carnival wear. There are laws, friends,—  
You have not read them—they are writ in German,  
But they are laws. And by the laws the blush  
Of shame is disaffected and forbidden,  
The proud tears of a patriot are not loyal,  
The thoughts of good men are against the statute ;  
Who would speak like a freeman must content him  
To walk a chain or two more like a slave.  
I break no laws. I tell you by the laws  
To inherit from your sires is robbery,  
To think what you are thinking is rebellion,  
To take the counsel of the brave is treason,  
To strike a despot on his throne is death.  
I do entreat you, friends, obey the laws !  
If you were heroes I must hold my peace.  
I should have sinn'd already. By the laws  
You should not see this sight if you were heroes ;  
But slaves ! behold !

[*The Monk sings.*

Some sad slow strain—

Deep wails and plaintive pain,

With thy most sorrowy soul, my harp, remember !

Hie where in some lone spot,  
By the cold hearth of a forsaken cot,  
A dying orphan cowers by the last ember !

To some unseen green space  
Of a deserted place,  
Where the pale grass and the lorn flowers are holy ;  
And of remorseless wrong,  
In mournful gusts and long,  
Winds cry at eve, where the betray'd lies lowly :

And with them, as they float—  
The wail and the wind note—  
Thy woes most sweet bewildermments entwine ;  
And, harp ! thou hast not found  
One desolate sad sound  
That does not ring like laughter on a grief like mine.

My harp ! how oft, when cold  
And worn with cares untold,  
With hearts untrue, stern looks, and sunless brows,  
Thy first sweet breath that stole  
Stirr'd incense in my soul,  
Like the south wind among the myrtle boughs.

But there are in our lot  
Thoughts where earth's sounds come not—  
Like the eternal calm of the mid-seas—  
And all that might have been  
And all that is,—oh Queen  
Of minstrelsy, thou hast no voice for these.



I hear, soul-wrapt, thy song  
In stirring notes and strong,  
High wandering in the years for ever flown ;  
To my exulting sight  
The gorgeous Past comes bright !  
In the broad earth too poor for her renown,  
ITALIA great and wise,  
Sits, and to golden skies  
Lifts the grand brow which clouds contend to crown.

But, oh ! if in that hour  
Of calm unchallenged power,  
Some vision of prescient fate supreme  
Forewarn her in mid-pride  
Of all that must betide,  
Who, who may sing the anguish of that dream ?  
Thy straining strings should start  
As breaks her bursting heart,  
And all thy broken chords confess the unconquer'd theme !

Return, my harp, return  
Beside this broken urn,  
Count the long days low lying where it lies ;  
Have all thy wandering will !  
With fitful fancies fill  
Long interludes of ill !  
With sweeping blasts and strange unearthly cries,  
Swift laughter, hurrying fears,  
Madness, and joys, and tears,  
And every mood that wayward wildness tries,  
These are the winged years !  
They pass. And where is she whose greatness claims the skies ?

Behold her ! wan and fair,  
Her pale arm soil'd and bare,  
That trembles in the intolerable chain—  
Behold the woes that rise  
To her undying eyes,  
Too proud to faint and too imperial to complain ;  
Behold her bend and grieve  
From shameful morn to eve,  
And till, with captive hands, the graves that hide her Slain !

Behold the toil that lives  
And strives, and sinks and strives !  
Her outraged looks to every heaven address !  
Her pride, grown fierce by fate,  
Her mien deject and great,  
Her violated bosom's wild unrest ;  
Behold her—travail-torn—  
Endured but still unborne  
Behold what fetters load her queenly breast.

Behold the glittering cares  
Her brow, in mockery, wears,  
The crowns of thorn and tinsel, tear-empearl'd ;  
Hark the unwonted names  
That consummate her shames !  
They dare not call her ROME—no, not down hurl'd  
And chain'd !—lest at the sound  
Each Vandal bond they bound  
Fall from her and confess the empress of the world !

Thus with untiring plaint  
How oft thy fancies paint  
Each changing mood of her unchanging woe.  
Before my sadden'd eyes  
Obedient dolours rise,  
A thousand subject passions pale and glow !  
And each new wrong she bears  
Thou actest in mine ears,  
And ill complains to ill, and blow resounds to blow !

But what shall paint the power  
Of that disastrous hour,  
When coarse oppression struck with ruder hand,  
And, at some worst disgrace,  
She raised her bleeding face,  
And saw with folded arms her sons consenting stand ?

My harp ! at that last gaze  
Her eyes, dishonoured, raise,  
Thou, with Timanthean woe grown utterless,  
Changing the unequal key  
Of slaves that might be free,  
But rot and smile in unavenged duress,  
Thy descant of disdain  
Loud liftest, till our pain  
Shows us the shade of *her* ineffable distress.

Then the mists are breaking !  
Then our hearts are waking !  
We call her " mother " ! and she answers ! Then

The blood that won these plains  
Boils in our modern veins,  
Years are unlived ! Italia ! once again,  
Where thy proud eagles shine  
All Roman, and all thine,  
We rise and—bah ! I dream'd that we were men !

[*Great confusion and outcry ; in the midst of which the  
MONK disappears.*

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## SCENE VIII.

*A Dungeon.*

*The Monk, VITTORIO SANTO, and a few of his chosen followers  
(among them the "Mother" of SCENE VI.) who are admitted  
to see him for the last time. They are conversing. His  
trial, by Austrian Court-martial, takes place at day-break.*

*The Monk.* I grant you there must be for every man  
Some hill, plain, valley, or familiar tree,  
Beside whose sweetness his young soul beholding,  
Grew till the invisible within put on  
The outward beauty. As your Roman mothers  
Conceiving gazed upon their marble gods,  
And brought forth sons like them. But if these homesteads  
Contain that wealth of utterless affections,

Hopes, fears, traditions, duties, memories,  
 Inborn respects, instincts of good and evil,  
 That creature faith, that visible religion,  
 Which my soul utters when I say "My country,"  
 Then the best sight makes the best citizen,  
 The horizon of our rights shuts in with age,  
 Each day of weeping leaves us less to weep for,  
 Infirmary makes outlaws, and the blind  
 Are aliens everywhere.

*A Youth.*                      Belovèd master,  
 For thus—sublime in the near neighbourhood  
 Of death—I must behold thee, even as men  
 On hill-tops seen against the heaven beyond  
 Seem giants—

*The Monk.* Friend, forbear. Who made me ruler  
 And judge among you—or who gave thee licence  
 To be a slave? Beloved, thou art young: the time  
 May come when thou shalt tremble to create  
 Or to depose a master. In dominion—  
 The universal idol—the world worships  
 The unknown God. Sometimes in these last hours  
 I have had visions of a more divine  
 Iconoclast, who shall demand, "Will God  
 Be worshipp'd in the noblest image?" Let  
 That pass. I feel it has not pass'd for ever.  
 Meanwhile learn this. Drawing near authority  
 To make or to unmake—Man, put thy shoes  
 From off thy feet, for the place where thou standest  
 Is holy ground.

*A Friend.*              Who then shall dare rebel?

*The Monk.* Well ask'd, brave patriot, where is that  
blasphemer

Who dares rebel? Let us obey. But, Roman,  
Shall we obey the living or the dead?  
"The powers that be!" By what sign will ye know  
The *powers* that be? My friends, we are the fools  
Of eyesight and the earthly habitudes  
Which cannot look aloft. Walking the plank  
Of life o'er the abyss, we fear to glance  
Or upward to the stars, or downward to the grave.  
Our souls, yoke-strain'd, in attitude of toil  
Bend earthward. Oft the *unworshipp'd* angel passeth  
While we, with eyes fix'd on the ground from which  
We came, adore his footsteps in the sand.  
And God, this while, is in the heaven of heavens!  
Stand! Christian! thou who hastest towards a throne  
By that old pathway which our fathers wore  
When a *king* sat there. Traitor! yon blood-stain'd  
Mad *sans-culotte*, whose godless feet are rattling  
Among kings' bones,—yon vulture of the nations,  
Yelling instinctive through the fateful air  
To deathstruck dynasties,—yon maniac serf  
Ringing his broken chains, and piling, wild  
With freedom, hills of courtly slain to reach  
The thronèd effigy to which thou kneelest,  
And strew the imperial tatters to the wind—  
That outlaw is no *rebel*! What art *thou*  
Who bendest to the empty rags which once  
Enrobed dominion, and with stiff knee passest  
That uncrown'd presence, unbegilt, unfeather'd,

Naked and full of God, whose step disturbs  
The centre of the world ?

Friends ! Gessler's hat

Two centuries hence had more divinity  
Than any crown to-day. Is aught on earth  
Eternal ? Man has rights ; but is a corpse  
A man ? Doth the heir rob the dead ? The stars  
Themselves burn out. Spring, summer, autumn, winter,  
Each traitor to the past, and each in turn  
To its own season loyal. Are these things  
Dumb ? Look on high. That which you call *rebellion*  
Is but the changed obedience which we pay  
To changing dispensations. The true rebel  
Is he who worships for the powers *that are*  
Powers *that are not*.

*(Enter a Jailor secretly disposed to favour the Monk.)*

*Jailor.* The hour, most reverend Sir,  
Of which you bade me warn you struck but now.  
One more is all the grace I dare. Even that  
Discover'd, would be bought with all my own.

*The Monk.* Good friend, we thank thee. Did we not know,  
jailor,  
That the time cometh when to have done this service  
To these and me this night shall more avail thee  
Than an imperial signet, we would speak  
Of recompence. Yet wear this, [*taking a ring from his*  
*finger,*] and forget not  
When it was given and why. Enough. We count  
The moments.

Gentle Romans, when ye enter

The land of milk and honey, recollect  
That God spared Rahab. The great day of reckoning  
Is not so far hence that ye shall forget  
Vittorio Santo's keeper.

*A Friend.* Show me why

It does not dawn to-morrow. 'T may suit well  
Thy monk's disguise to draw the sword of the Spirit,  
And wrestle not with flesh and blood, but hath  
Rome one arm only? How shall he whose tongue  
Fate hung awry be eloquent? My comrades,  
*Thus!* [*With a gesture.*] In truth, Santo, my right worthy  
friend,

Methinks thou hast even offer'd up thyself  
And thy good cause on a cold altar—

*The Monk.* So

Did Abel.

*The Friend.* Yes, 'tis well, 'tis very well,  
Noble no doubt and wondrous heavenly, but—

*An elder Friend.* Peace, stripling! Friend revered, thou  
hast wrought out

Thy chosen path to freedom. It ends here.

*The Monk* (*pointing up*). THERE. I am no such royal  
guest, dear Cosmo,

But I can stand a moment at the gate.

*Cosmo.* We, reverent of thy martyr zeal, but hearing  
A voice which calls us by a shorter road  
To be cut out by hands, ask if the sword  
That patriot draws be guilty?

*The Monk.* When the Baptist  
Call'd to repentance, did he weigh the dust



And measure out the sackcloth ? Let a prophet  
Wait upon silence. Who can hold his peace  
Hath said his message. Things that once have dwelt  
In heaven will make that prison, a man's heart,  
Glad to release them. Let the seer see  
And he will cry. Herein I have not seen.  
The image that for me fills earth and heaven  
Shuts out the shapes beyond.

*A Woman* ("the Mother" in Scene VI.) Yet, father,—oh  
Let me still call thee so !—are there not hard  
Unripen'd times, when the gold sickle of angels  
Reaps not the harvest—early dawns of truth,  
When we must burn a grosser light than day ?

*The Monk.* If the true man were of the world, and had  
The sun of his great orbit in its centre,  
And kept the measure of its seasons, then,  
Daughter, thou hadst said well. But he who steps  
Forth from the radiant chambers of the future  
To show us how the unseen ages look ;  
He who comes forth a voluntary hostage  
Of the supreme good-will of times to come ;  
He who grew up among your children's children,  
And calls by name the years you never knew ;  
He who takes counsel of the things that yet  
Are not, and answers with his kindling eyes  
Questions ye cannot hear ; he who is set  
Among us pigmies, with a heavenlier stature  
And brighter face than ours, that we must leap  
Even to smite it,—that man, friends, must have  
The self-existence of a god. From him

The poor necessities, hopes, fears, and fashions  
 Of the expedient Present, fall like waves  
 From adamant. Friends ! learn a prophet's patience.  
 Do you remember how, in backward years,  
 Night after night the patient harvest-moon  
 Climbs her high seat above the silent fields,  
 In act to reign. Bating no majesty  
 For her great solitude. Unmann'd, below,  
 The golden plenty spreads, unwarn'd of change,  
 Ample repose. From corn-crown'd hill to hill,  
 From waving slope to slope, where sickly winds  
 Disturb'd flit blind from sudden sleep to sleep,  
 From calm auriferous deeps and from the broad  
 Pale distance, drowsy in the genial light,  
 From all the dull expanse of voiceless plains,  
 O'er which, unscared, the midnight curlew cries,  
 No answering horn salutes her. Smile on, pale,  
 Prophetic queen ! Know ere thy wane, thine hosts,  
 Thy sounding hosts, shall darken all the vales !  
 Not otherwise the poet and the prophet,  
 The patriot and the sage.

*The Youth.*                      This is well said.  
 And if we desperate men had calm or leisure  
 To seek the fruit of knowledge where it hangs  
 Through all the fair wide gardens of the soul,  
 Doubtless 'twere reverend idlesse. But, good Sir,  
 A partisan in war time must needs carry  
 His daily meed of duty in his hand.  
 We have no time—we freemen—

*The Monk.*                      Ah, young friend,  
 Dost thou too die to-morrow ?

*Gonzalo (a friend).* Noble Sir,  
Forgive him !

*The Monk.* He spake not amiss, Gonzalo,  
A little out of tune, no more. I thank him.  
And if I could dismiss you from this last  
Communion, with no ampler utterance  
Than yet hath pass'd between us ; if I left you  
Here upon earth, and with the clouds above,  
To the dim sayings of the sibylline stars,  
And now, at midnight, gave your tear-blind eyes  
No compass but the landmarks, which serve angels  
Journeying heaven and earth, Rezzio's rebuke  
Flying before would shut against my soul  
The gates of paradise. I have come short  
Of my high calling, friends, but (I thank God)  
Not thus far. The old Castellan, just now,  
Came not unbidden. I desired, my brethren,  
To ask of you, this our last mutual hour,  
A death gift,—if you like it—laid upon  
My funeral pile. Somewhat I had to say.

*A Friend (aside).* Son.

*The Son (aside).* Father.

*The Friend (aside).* Mine own chaplain—hasten—

*The Monk (observing them).* Marquis,

Are we such strangers ? Sirs, ye do me wrong.  
What chrysm can hold, what hand of flesh can spread  
The unction of a soul ? I bear in me  
The priesthood of a Christian man, and do  
My own death-rites. What sins I have, are written  
On high : and that angelic record needs  
No death-bed supplement. Son ! let us brighten

This last best hour with thoughts that shining through  
To-morrow's tears shall set in our worst cloud  
The bow of promise. In my life, long past,  
There is a passage, friends, which set apart  
From our rich confidence, I have reserved  
As burden for this hour. Ye are just, brethren,  
And will believe me that I dig this dust  
Of personal remembrance as the sands  
Of golden shores. In giving you the wisdom  
Which I received, and now commit to your  
Chaste hands, with prayers, ye may be better stewards,  
I wish, if I may speak thus, to transplant,  
Not the fruit only, but the tree whereon  
It grew ; that so they may have life in you,  
Unto a goodlier increase. And for this  
Awful and mystic husbandry I chose  
The climate of the grave. And if, dear friends,  
I stray some moments from my history,  
Through the sideways of sterile circumstance,  
Be gracious to the old man garrulous.  
The *old man*, friends. Age is the shadow of death,  
Cast where he standeth in the radiant path  
Of each man's immortality. What age,  
To the dumb infant of eternity,  
Bring threescore years and ten ? Brother Gonzalo,  
Prithee that prison water-jar. My lips  
Are feverish with to-morrow. [*He drinks.*

Wells the spring  
Pure even here ? Oh nature, nature, thou  
Hast done thy part ! Thanks, gentle friends.

I turn thee loose among the fields of old. Now soul,  
[*He pauses.*]

Imperial Summer in hot luxury  
Reign'd like a new-crown'd caliph. Heavy Noon,  
Golden and dead-asleep, oppressive lay,  
Athwart the sated world. I, book in hand,  
Wander'd since dawn, it was my wont, those fair  
Campanian fields where ancient poets went  
To learn the fragrance of ambrosial air,  
And every nymph was Hebe—but where now,  
When the serf makes his lair where Romans dwelt,  
Nature, disdainful of the hideous trespass,  
Teaches, retributive, the wasting cheek  
How slaves should look. From early morn to eve  
My feet had roam'd these plains, my heart the ages.  
And burden'd with the brightness of the hour,  
I sought the shade which old Vespasian built.  
Those walls which, lest degenerate tongues disturb  
The indignant dead, we call the Coliseum—  
Those wondrous walls which, like the monument  
Of some old city of the plague, stand up  
Mighty in strength and ruin, with no more  
Decay than serves for epitaph, and takes  
Impiety from pride, and breaks the crown'd  
Pillar of triumph on the conqueror's grave.  
Those walls whose grey infirmities seem only  
The mood of an imperishable face,  
Awful as scars upon a Titan's brow,  
Dread as a strong man's tears. Small marvel, truly,

With that eternal witness looking on,  
That thou, Campagna ! art for very shame  
True to the days of old !

Entering, I sat  
Refresh'd in shadow, and like some high wizard,  
In wayward hour, call'd with a god's caprice  
Spirits of new and old. In that doom-ring  
Of time, who would not be magician ? Now,  
I sought old chronicles for Nero's house,  
That golden crown that made mount Palatine  
Royal. And those imperial halls wherein  
Cæsar is still august. Now, pensive, sitting  
Within the very shade of destiny,  
I saw their ruins strew the hills of Rome.  
And looking forth through rents, by which the years  
Pass in and out, I gazed as one should gaze  
Upon some battle-field of the old gods.  
And the Olympian slain lay there, unearth'd,  
With whitening limbs—like bark'd oaks, thunder-scar'd,  
Loading the fearful ground, ghastly and gaunt,  
In all the dreadful attitudes of death.  
So sojourning—a pilgrim of the past—  
Kind sleep o'ertook me, travel-worn of soul.  
My eyes, unconscious, closed to scenes without,  
And at a shout I open'd them within  
Upon the world of dreams. With strange recoil  
As at a nod, the extended scroll of time  
Roll'd up full fifteen ages. That Honorius  
Who cut the world in two, gave holiday  
To all the pride of Rome. The new arena,

(For in old Rome three hundred years seem'd new,) Which great Vespasian, working for all time, Built up with Jewish hands, (as he would sweat Their immortality into the stone,) Teem'd to the parapet. The sun of noon Shed golden evening through a silken heaven, Fair floating, which for clouds received the incense Of all the Arabies. Luxurious art Ensnared the unwilling winds, and like toil'd eagles, Held them through all the hot Italian day, Flapping cool pleasures. Ever-falling waters Solaced the ear, themselves beheld through fragrance, Till the lapp'd sense in soft confusion own'd Redolent light. Behind a hedge of gold In the elysian field, imperial state Purpled the ring. High, high, and higher rose The babel tower of heap'd up life, and o'er This strange rich arras, rainbow-hued and vast, The eternal marble, imminent, look'd down, And the cyclopean mass of the huge walls Frown'd from the arches. And before their stern And monumental grandeur, the up-piled Mortality was as this hand beside This rock-hewn dungeon. In the midst stand I, On that tremendous theatre condemn'd To play the last red scene of a short life, Lest Cæsar yawn. You heavens!

While I draw sword  
And do the hideous courtesies of war,  
My senses, quick with fate, learn all the scene,

And snuff, prescient, on the heavy air  
The perfumed death. My foe, a Spartacus  
In make and weapon, took with careless scorn  
The languid challenge ; and with his flat sword  
Spurn'd me to action. So have I beheld  
At the unequal pleasure of the winds,  
Some poplar giant—tyrant of the plain—  
Fall foul of some slim cypress. Point to point,  
And blade to blade, and hilt to hilt opposed,  
The glittering mazes of the gleaming glaive  
Coil and recoil. The waxing strife has shrunk  
The earth to standing-ground. The whole wrapt being  
Sent hot into the hand, spares not one sense  
Beyond the sword-arm's circle. Into which  
Half-understood, the dreadful seas of clamour  
Thunder their surges. So, meseems, a soul  
Falling through mid-space hears the passing shout  
Of unseen worlds. And now the giant, stung,  
Casts off his sword craft. Striding like a storm,  
Uproots me, lightening. See my blade fly up  
Like a flung torch ; myself into the dust  
Hurl'd like a spear ; and the goliath folding  
His untask'd arms upon his unbreathed breast,  
Look up without a flush for the well-known  
Signal of doom. Two hundred thousand hands  
Gave it. He saw. While the sword rose and fell,  
Up from the podium to the beetling height  
I turn'd one dying look to the mute nation  
Which—stretching neck and nerve with sanguine strain  
To catch the bloody joy—through all its legions



Held such a stifled horrible expectance,  
As if the greed of anguish could not spare  
The groan a sigh might cover. Round the vast  
O'er-peopled hell the terrible haste of death  
Took my mad eyes, and, in the indistinct  
Wild glance, its serried thousands glared on me  
Like one tremendous face.

Consenting sat

That day, all that the world most loved, fear'd, worshipp'd.  
Sages whose household words, caught up, made proverbs  
For far-off nations ; grey proconsuls, warriors  
Whose mere names stood for victory in all  
The tongues of Europe ; senators whose title  
Ennobled kings ; priests of all orders, bishops  
Whose heavenly treasure was not lent, as yet,  
To earthly usury ; great merchants, men  
Who dealt in kingdoms ; ruddy aruspex,  
And pale philosopher, who bent beneath  
The keys of wisdom ; artists, and whatever  
In Rome claimed to be poet ; woman, too,  
And passing fair,—not that mine eye had note  
Of any separate loveliness, or knew,  
More than a sense of exquisite relief,  
A more or less in hate, an intuition  
That in the living mountain which rose round  
All was not adamant ; a milder mood  
In a most terrible destiny. I saw it,  
As when upon the fretful parapet  
Of some vast cloud that doth engird the west,  
Flush'd and distemper'd with the angry hues

Of passionate sunset, oft at eve there shineth  
A line of purer light. All these sat there  
Consenting, and with them the purple pride  
To which all these bow'd down ;—and I must die.  
Swept through the silence a great wind of voices,  
“ Look to the podium ! ” Breaking from the ranks  
A christian priest—I knew him by his habit—  
Cleaves the gold fences,—lion-proof—with more  
Than lion's heart, and, as the sword fell, stands  
’Twixt me and slaughter. Abdiel with such gesture  
Held Satan off. The rude barbarian, scorning  
The feeble game, flings down his sword. That moment  
Methought hell burst, and in a death-trance heard I  
The outcry of the damn'd. The observant host  
Rose like the simultaneous tide when hid  
Volcanos heave the ocean, and a long  
Vast wave engulfs an island. Not the war  
Even of those seas drowning the blasphemies  
Of shrieking sinking cities, storms the ear  
Like what I heard. Tremendous rushing life  
Yell'd round the place, and, as the howling vortex  
Belch'd up its sounds, the screaming horrors struck  
The impassive walls, and like caged fiends came back  
Convulsed with madness. Then the tempest turns  
Inwards, and with one gust, as at a sign,  
Guts the stone entrails of the awful tower  
In whirlwind of revenge. Like an explosion  
Down hails the hurricane fury. So Vesuvius  
With mountains wrench'd from her own bowels, piles  
Shouting the blasted plain.

Slain, slain and buried  
By the same act, under one terrible heap  
Lay martyr, victor, vanquish'd. Last to die  
I felt the growing weight and heard through all  
The exulting thousands. How the sounds dash'd down  
Like stamping furies. Here the vision ends :  
With the death-pang I woke.

Absolute calm,  
A silence like the silence of the desert,  
Silence beyond repose, lone, lifeless, stagnant,  
Muter than any grave. Silence too dead  
For living tongue to name. Silence more placid  
Than peace or night or death ; (for these are strings  
Unstruck but to be stricken ;) idiot silence,  
Sterile, and blank, and blind. A breathless pause  
In heaven and earth ; held till the moving thought  
Seems turbulence, this human nature grows  
Unseemly on us, our life's common functions  
Impertinent and gross, and conscious cheeks  
Excuse the beating heart with blushes. Silence  
As of a listening world. Such strange defect,  
Such lean and hungry quiet, such keen sense  
Of absence grown effectual, that the ear  
Faints as for breath, and even the very substance  
Of latent sound seems dead. Alas ! for language,  
We sing the healing darkness of sweet night,  
But for Egyptian darkness that was felt  
Have names no blacker. When *you* speak of silence,  
'Tis as the sweet content of voiceless woods  
After the nightingale—as the home-genius

Sole watching by the sleep of happy babes  
With finger at her lip, and shows of stillness,  
Meanwhile the sleeper smileth and the air  
Stirs with dream-music. When *I* use the word  
Think of some other silence. In that other  
I woke.

From sound to stillness as when stormy hearts  
In passion break. From tempest to dead calm,  
As when at some strange portent clashing hosts  
Halt in mid-shock. From all to nothingness,  
A soul from chaos shot into the void  
Beyond the universe.

In my short rest

From imminent heights, the dust of slow decay—  
Sands from the glass of time shaken of winds—  
Crumbs from the feast of desolation—strew'd  
My slumbering face upturn'd. The Gorgon Sleep  
Made them a shower of stones. My wondering eyes  
O'er-charged with sense, in shuddering unbelief  
Unclose upon the lone inane expanse  
Of summer turf, from which the mouldering walls  
Shut not the sunshine ; like a green still lake  
Girt by decaying hills. Urging my gaze  
Round the tremendous circle, arch on arch,  
And pile on pile, that tired the travell'd eye,  
I saw the yawning jaws and sightless sockets  
Gape to the heedless air. Like the death'shead  
Of buried empire. And the sun shone through them  
With calm avoidance that left them more dark,  
And pleased him with some small daisy's face

Grass-grown. As though even from the carrion of gods,  
The instinct of the living universe  
Held heaven and earth aloof. All through the lorn  
Vacuity winds came and went, but stirr'd  
Only the flowers of yesterday. Upstood  
The hoar unconscious walls, bisson and bare,  
Like an old man deaf, blind, and grey, in whom  
The years of old stand in the sun, and murmur  
Of childhood and the dead. From parapets  
Where the sky rests, from broken niches—each  
More than Olympus,—for gods dwelt in them,—  
Below from senatorial haunts and seats  
Imperial, where the everpassing fates  
Wore out the stone, strange hermit birds croak'd forth  
Sorrowful sounds, like watchers on the height  
Crying the hours of ruin. When the clouds  
Dress'd every myrtle on the walls in mourning,  
With calm prerogative the eternal pile  
Impassive shone with the unearthly light  
Of immortality. When conquering suns  
Triumph'd in jubilant earth, it stood out dark  
With thoughts of ages : like some mighty captive  
Upon his deathbed in a christian land,  
And lying, through the chant of Psalm and Creed  
Unshriven and stern, with peace upon his brow,  
And on his lips strange gods.

Rank weeds and grasses,  
Careless and nodding, grew, and asked no leave,  
Where Romans trembled. Where the wreck was saddest  
Sweet pensive herbs, that had been gay elsewhere,

With conscious mien of place rose tall and still,  
And bent with duty. Like some village children  
Who found a dead king on a battle-field,  
And with decorous care and reverent pity  
Composed the lordly ruin, and sat down  
Grave without tears. At length the giant lay,  
And everywhere he was begirt with years,  
And everywhere the torn and mouldering Past  
Hung with the ivy. For Time, smit with honour  
Of what he slew, cast his own mantle on him,  
That none should mock the dead.

Oh Solitude,

What dost thou here ? Where are those legions ? They  
Were men, not spirits. Where those shouts that like  
Wild waves upon a low lee shore, but now  
Lash'd me to death ? Thou Earth, where didst thou quake  
When they went down ? Was it that shock, oh Earth,  
That left these ruins ? Crying thus, I ponder'd  
The subject of my dream. Beside me still  
Lay that old chronicle whence, as from some  
Quaint ancient banquet-hall, a gorgeous bevy  
Of gods and men had pass'd forth with my soul  
Into sleep's stranger pleasaunce, and thence straying  
Wander'd the world. The open page, held wide  
By my stretch'd slumbering arm, interpreted  
The vision. There my waking eyes had closed.  
'Twas where Honorius on a high day gives  
Games to great Rome ; and one unfriended priest,  
Telemachus by name, soul-stricken, leaps  
The circus fences, and in mid-arena

Stays the unholy combat, and dies there,  
Stoned by the people. When he walk'd through Rome  
That morning, no man turned to gaze on him.  
He had no friend, no mistress, no disciple,  
No power, fame, fortune, wealth, or human cunning,  
And hath no record upon earth but this,  
That he died there. Yet those walls where he suffer'd—  
Those great imperial monumental walls  
Built to feast nations in for ever—stand  
From that day tenantless. In that man's blood  
Baptized to ruin. Then my heart cried out,  
Herein, oh prophet, learn a prophet's duty!  
For this cause is he born, and for this cause,  
For this cause comes he to the world—to *bear*  
*Witness*. Oh God-ordain'd! thine hands are God's!  
Sully them not. The days shall come when men  
Who would be angels shall look back to see  
What thou wert. Live for them. Speak, speak thy message;  
The world runs post for thee. The good by nature,  
The bad by fate;—whom the avenging gods  
Having condemn'd have first demented. Know  
By virtue of that madness they are thine.  
Lay-brothers working where the sanctity  
Of thine high office comes not. Savage friends  
Who, scattering in their wrath thy beacon, light  
The fire that clears the wilderness. Unconscious  
Disciples, writing up the martyr's title  
In Hebrew, Greek, and Latin on his cross.  
Love him who loves thee; his sweet love hath bought  
A place in heaven. But love him more who hates,

For he dares hell to serve thee. Pray for him  
 Who hears thee gladly ; it shall be remember'd  
 On high. But, martyr ! count thy debt the greater  
 To the reviler ; *he* hath bought thy triumph  
 With his own soul. In all thy toils forget not  
 That whoso sheddeth his life's blood for thee . .  
 Is a good lover ; but thy great apostle,  
 Thy ministering spirit, thy spell-bound  
 World-working giant, thy head hierophant  
 And everlasting high priest, is that sinner  
 Who sheds thine own.

*A Friend.*

Alas !

*Another.*

'Tis a hard saying,

Who can hear it ?

## SCENE IX.

### *The Trial.*

*An Austrian Court-martial. A number of Officers as Judges.  
 An empty chair for the President, who enters during the  
 proceedings. A subordinate Officer prosecutes. Various  
 Witnesses. A great crowd of Auditors. The Monk stands  
 in the midst with an abstracted air, murmuring to himself.*

*Prosecutor.* The court has heard the minstrel,  
 Henri de Jaloux ; the most reverend father,  
 Ghiotto Ingordo ; and the rustic crowd  
 Brought under guard from Milan.



Noble Sirs,

Will't please you listen to an aged witness,  
A simple man, but of a good report,  
And grey in loyalty. Codardo Goffo,  
Stand forth! Now, worthy Goffo, of what crime  
Dost thou here charge the prisoner?—

*A Judge.*

Speak, old man!

*Old Goffo.* So please you, I was working in the fields;  
I serve my lord our bishop—and our bull,  
Mad with the fly—for, an it please your worships,  
Since I drove plough, which will be thirty year  
Come Martinmas, for an it please your worships,  
My lord the bishop's land—not that I say it  
For any ill-will to my lord the bishop—  
But so it is—your worships please to ask  
Giacchimo,—*young* Giacchimo—(poor old Giacch,  
We wore him out.) Your worships, 'tis no use  
Denying it. But as I say, our bull  
Curst with the midge—

*Prosecutor.*

Speak to the case, old man,

You see the prisoner!

*Old Goffo.*

Ay, Sir, ay. Our bull,

Bit like a loach—

*A Judge.*

Wake up, thou prating loon,

Or have thine ears slit! To the case, I say,

And leave this babble!

*Old Goffo.*

Good, your worships, yes.

Where was I, please your worships? Ay. Our bull—

*A Judge.* Silence!

*Another Judge.* Nay, Colonel, let him on. Well, sirrah !

*Old Goffo.* Our bull, your worship—I am seventy year  
And more, but let me see the beast, your worship,  
That throws me, bull or cow, with a fair odds.  
But, as I say, our Lammas calf—a better  
Never suck'd dam—'twas eight weeks old that day,  
Had took the murrain—as it might be here  
I made a shift—my poor old back, your worships !  
And knelt to feed it ; when up comes our bull,  
And down I am. Not that I think, your worships,—

*A Judge.* Babbling old man, hear me. Answer me shortly  
What I shall ask thee. Jailor, heat thine irons,  
And burn his tongue out if he fails. Now, sirrah,  
What of this man ?

*Old Goffo.* Please you, my lord, he came—  
Not that I ever saw him till that hour—  
My lord, I am a poor old man, my lords,  
I am a very poor old man—the bishop—

*A Judge.* Silence ! the prisoner saved you ? Is it so ?

*Old Goffo.* Please you, my lord, he did, my lord—

*A Judge.* And you ?

*Old Goffo.* My lords, it was the only piece I had—  
By all the saints !—nay, pray, your worships, mercy,  
A poor old man ! I meant to pay it back—  
My lord the bishop's steward that same day,  
Says he, Go buy—

*A Judge.* Enough ! you gave the prisoner  
A coin—and why ?

*Old Goffo.* An offering, please your worships,

An old man's life is sweet—I swear, my lords,  
Only an offering—nay—

*Another Judge.* Piously done !

Speak up, good man ! The prisoner took it ?

*Old Goffo.* Ah,

Sirs, that an honest man who served his bishop  
Good sixty year—nay, I might say, your worships,  
Sixty and one : at Martinmas—I mind it  
Well—I was hired. My mother—rest her soul,  
She was a mother, sirs,—she says—says she—

*A Judge.* Jailor, your irons !

*Old Goffo.* Mercy, oh, my lords,

I will speak—mercy, oh, my lords—

*A Judge.* Hear me,

Say yes or no. The prisoner kept your coin ?

*Old Goffo.* No, please my lord.

*A Judge.* No, sirrah ! How ?

*Old Goffo.* Nay, mercy !

My lords, I will tell all.

*Judge.* Peace, fool, say on.

*Old Goffo.* Please you, he flung it on the ground, and  
stamp'd it

Like any ram—my lords—as I stand here,—

And said—

*Judge.* Ay, tell us what he said.

*Old Goffo.* My lords,

I am a very feeble poor old man,

I pray your worships mercy—on my knees—

My lords—my youngest girl left one small child,

For pity's sake, my lords, remember it,—  
 My youngest daughter, please your worships,—she  
 Left him to me—for pity's sake, my lords,  
 My lords, for pity's sake !

*A Judge.* Is there none here  
 Who will interpret this strange witness ?

*Prosecutor.* Sir,  
 The poor half-witted dotard fears to be  
 Confounded with his benefactor. I,  
 Marshalling the evidence, heard this from him,  
 That when the prisoner saw the superscription  
 And image of my lord the duke, he spurn'd  
 The money, and declared that masses bought  
 With king-stamp'd price purchased the soul for hell,  
 With sundry other ravings, treating of  
 Rome and Republics.

*A Judge.* Is this so ?

*Old Goffo.* My lords,  
 'Tis very true.

*President (who enters).* Eh—eh—why this is treason,  
 Treason—eh—said he so ?—honest old man,  
 Speak on—he told thee—eh—yes, yes, he told thee  
 All kinds of things—eh—yes—to slay the bishop,  
 Speak out—fear not—to slay the bishop—eh ?—

*Old Goffo.* My lords, as I shall answer on my soul,  
 He said not so ; rather, my lords, he bade—

*President.* There, get you gone—there, get you gone—

*Prosecutor.* Call up  
 Signor Pulito Mansueto. Now, Sir,  
 What say you ?

*Mansueto.* Sir, I have a son. The son  
Of my grey widowhood. To whose dear tune  
I have so play'd my life, in the dim future  
Of my old heart I own no single hope  
That has not all his features. What he was  
To me, a daughter seem'd to my rich neighbour,  
Worthy Antonio ; and wherein my son  
Fail'd of perfection's stature, it did show  
Complete in her. Antonio and I,  
Old schoolfellows—had mark'd them for each other,  
Well pleased to make our dynasties shake hands  
When we might greet no longer.

That their love  
Should have run smoothly in the golden channels  
Made by the hands that made them, Sir, what father  
Will doubt ? Sirs, where my garden joins the fields  
Low in the vale, no hedge shuts out the fairies,  
But Art and Nature, intimately sweet,  
Exchange their beauties. Fond amidst them runs  
brook, that like some babbling child between  
Two bashful lovers, telling tales to each,  
Perfects their friendship. Bowering all the way  
With equal joy, they clothe it, and in love  
Shut out the very sun. Hither my boy  
Came oft, at noon, to sing and meditate  
Antonio's daughter :—his sole confidante  
An ancient dulcimer, the quaint strange spoil  
Of some old disinterrèd city. Here,  
Good Sirs, this traitor met him, and did use—  
So I learn now—to sing his witchcraft to him,

Discoursing much of other mistresses,  
 Freedom and Rome—(the Mussulman): in fine,  
 My son, beguiled, Sirs, by this sorcerer's spells,  
 Slighted Antonio's daughter, and is gone  
 I know not whither.

*A Judge.* Is it likely, friend,  
 The poison wrought no further? Had this knave  
 No monetary service of your son?  
 Had he—

*President.* Eh—money—eh—old gentleman?  
 What? Did he rob you?

*Mansueto.* On my honour, *no*.  
 My child, Sir, is no felon. He took nothing  
 But his old lyre. Nay, now you urge my thought,  
 There was an ancient toga which had hung  
 With other Roman relics in my hall,  
 He took that with him. And God bless him with it!  
 Sir, I am not a seer, but methinks  
 Your house is childless.

*Prosecutor.* Call Capo di Matti!  
 Now, Matti, what are you?

*Matti.* My lords, I am,  
 Or was, my lords, of late, house-steward to  
 My lord the marquis.

*A Judge.* And you know this man?

*President.* Eh—eh—you know him? Look the man in the  
 face.

Turn about, prisoner! Eh, you dog—

*Matti.* My lords,  
 He was a frequent guest where I have served,

A very turbulent fellow, good my lords,  
And dangerous to the state.

*A Judge.*

And in your business—

*President.* Eh—yes, your business—eh ? your daily business  
At table, eh ? and so forth. You have heard—  
Speak up, Sir, you have heard ?

*Matti.*

As this, my lords.

His manner was to say with many words,  
Your worships have no right in Italy,  
No, not so much as to the ground you stand on.  
Then 'twas his pleasure to revile crown'd heads ;  
His highness is no duke,—his majesty  
No emperor or king,—my lord the pope—  
A Catholic tongue, my lords, may not deliver  
His awful discourse of my lord the pope !  
But most, my lords, it was his wont to boast  
Of some strange secret known to himself only,  
To sweep your worships from this land, without  
Gun, sword, or pistol. Which, my lords, I hold  
To be some compound hot and devilish  
Of his black art. My lords, I know the time  
When I have sick'd to hear him. Once, my lords,  
As I shall answer on my sinful soul,  
The prisoner promised my late lord, the marquis,  
To show him all his secret after dinner,  
I' the garden house. My lords, some said that eve  
It thunder'd. I knew better.

*A Judge.*

This is fearful,

Well, Sir,—

*Matti.* And, please your lordships, at my lord's

He wore no cowl—my lords, he is no priest—  
 This gown, my lords, is worn the better to carry  
 His villanous compound. I have heard him say so.

*A Judge.* Heaven and earth!

*President.* What? what? not a priest, and wear  
 Priest's clothes? Why, blasphemy—eh? Blasphemy,  
 Rank blasphemy—put it down so.

*A Judge.* Well, fellow,  
 This shall be thought on.

*Matti.* I do fear to say  
 What more I heard.

*A Judge.* Speak out!

*Another.* Sirrah, thine oath!

*Matti.* Nay then, my lords, nay, to say truth, my lords,  
 A man is none the worse for what he hears—  
 Or you, my lords—

*A Judge.* Speak to the point!

*Matti.* My lords,  
 Am I held guiltless?—Servants have their duties—

*A Judge.* Speak out, I say.

*Matti.* My lords, it seems to pass  
 Man's wickedness—but, as I hope to see  
 Heaven and the blessed, this man hath conspired  
 To level every city, small and great,  
 In all this land save one. Sirs, take it down;  
 I swear, my lords, even to the very words  
 A hundred times repeated, till my knees  
 Shook to stand by—"Rome all, Rome only," so  
 He phrased it. I speak true, my lords—

*Prosecutor.* The Court



Shall hear a confirmation. You may go.  
Stand up, Bugiardo Sporco, serving-man  
To the aforesaid marquis—

*A Voice from the Crowd.* But discharged  
(Let the Court take good note of it) for lying,  
Theft, and adultery.

*Prosecutor.* Silence ! my lord marquis.  
Now, fellow, have you heard ill of this prisoner ?

*Sporco.* Times out of mind, my lord.

*A Judge.* Tell what was wont  
To be his converse at your master's table.

*Sporco.* First and foremost, to cut all Austrian throats—  
Pillage all churches—ravish all the women,  
And hold them afterwards in common ; ten  
To each man. Then he had a plan to roast—

*Shouts from the Crowd.* Down with the rascal ! kill him  
where he stands.

Stones ! Stones ! Stones !

*A Judge.* Soldiers, save the witness.

*Another.* Charge

This rabble.

*A Friend of the Monk's.* Peace, good people.

*The Crowd.* Peace ! peace ! peace !

*Prosecutor.* Call up—

*A Judge.* The Court is satisfied. Arraign  
The prisoner.

*An Officer.* How say'st thou, Vittorio Santo,  
Sometime, but falsely, self-styled Monk of Jesus,  
And now on trial : Thou hast had free hearing  
Of thine accusers. Speak. Guilty or not ?

*The Monk (musing).* "It is in vain to rise up early, to sit  
Up late, to eat the bread of sorrows. So  
He giveth His beloved rest."

*Officer.* Vittorio Santo! self-styled Monk of Jesus,  
Guilty or not? Answer!

*The Monk (musing).* You, you that cry  
"How long?" be patient; is not your heaven sweet?

*Officer.* Vittorio Santo—self-styled Monk of Jesus,  
Guilty or not?

*The Monk (musing).* Brother! it is thy voice;  
'Twas well of thee, my brother! to speak now.  
The home, the plain, the column by the tower,  
Sickness, thy love, loss, death: the revelation,  
Resolve, thought, labour, disappointment, triumph,  
And now the end. Yes, it was well, my brother!

*A Judge.* Shout in his ear. Smite him, ye drowsy guards.  
What! shall this slave despise us? Corporal, hither!  
Thou hast a voice, cry out, "Vittorio Santo,  
Guilty or not?"

*Corporal (shouts).* Santo! Vittorio Santo!  
Guilty or not?

*The Monk.* I am a Roman. Find me  
A judge and I refuse not to be tried.

*Prosecutor.* Traitor! thou standest at the judgment-seat  
Of Wollustling von Bauerhund von Bosen,  
Baron of Herrschwuth, and Scheinheiligfeit,  
Count d'Omicidio, Marshal in the armies  
Of that dread sovereign Apostolical  
Our Liege and thine—the imperial Ferdinand,  
Emperor of Austria—King—

*The Monk.* Peace ! I have heard  
His titles. Find me, friend, a judge, and I  
Refuse not to be tried.

*The President.* A judge ! eh ? what ?  
A judge—eh—are we not a judge ? eh ? what ?  
Nay, pull his cowl about his face ! There ! flout him !  
Spit at him ! Dog ! Nay, we will teach thee, cur !  
A judge forsooth ! Pluck the mad priest by the nose ;  
Nay, not a judge ? Then hear thy sentence—

*The Monk.* Spare  
Thy lips, for I appeal.

*President.* Appeal, appeal,  
Nay, he appeals, the dog ! Appeals ! hear that !  
By Heavens ! appeals ! *Appeal*, vile slave ? to whom ?

*The Monk.* To that which—looking o'er your heads and  
through  
These walls, which soon shall be as dust—I see  
Rise like an awful spirit from the earth.  
To you, as yet, invisible. To me,  
Present and filling all things. Strong as fate ;  
Dreadful as heavenly justice ; more imperial  
Than all the builders of the Babylons ;  
Invincible as death ; and beautiful  
As itself only.

*President.* Drag the traitor out !  
What ! Does he threaten us with ghosts ?

*Men rush in shouting.* To arms !  
To arms !

*Others.* The mob !

*Others.* Rebellion !

*Others.* Carbonari !

*A Judge.* Guard the priest !

*Enter Soldier.*

*Soldier.* Captain, twenty thousand men,  
By my guess—rogues and peasants—

*Captain.* How far hence ?

*Soldier.* Three gunshots.

*Captain.* Armed ?

*Soldier.* Ordnance, they say !

*Captain.* Who leads ?

*Soldier.* A Woman.

*A Judge.* Man the gates !

*Men (rushing in).* The mob ! the mob !

*A Spectator (to the Monk).* Be these thy ghosts then ?

*The Monk.* Were the troubled waters

The angel ? Yet how many at Bethesda

Saw no more than the trouble !

*Spectator.* Being heal'd,

What matter ?

*The Monk.* Good friend, much. The heal'd will worship

The healer.

*Men (rushing in).* Haste, haste, haste.

*More.* My lords ! a woman,

My lords ! a woman like a prophetess,

Hair in the winds, and eyes on fire—

*A Judge.* We know.

Peace ! Guards, remove the prisoner !

*President.* Eh—eh—what—

Remove—remove—yes, yes, off with him—eh ?

You lag? You dogs! lend me a bayonet! There,  
There! by the heels! Drag him out by the heels!

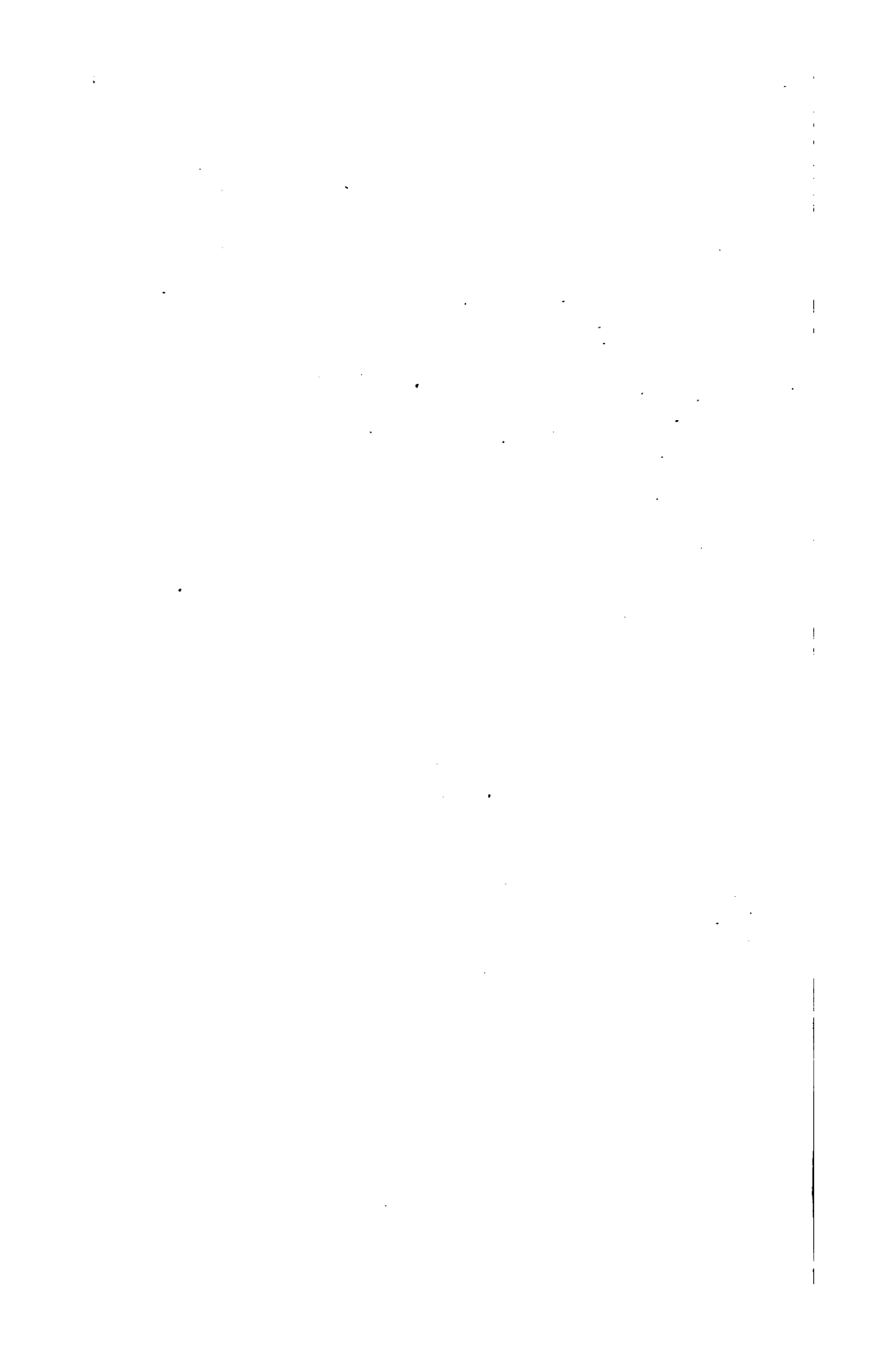
*A Judge (to the Captain).* Tell off two hundred. By the  
southern gate

Lead out your prisoner. Underneath the walls  
Let him be shot. Face right about, and reach  
The western heights.

*Great shouts without.* Down with the Austrians! Arms!  
Blood! Charge! Death—death to tyrants! Victory! Freedom!

THE END.

2033  
7/29/11



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